

# IMPACT

August/September '99

press

#22 - Free

## Prisoners of Conscience

Imprisoned Justice Fighters  
in the American legal system

by merris sullivan and  
patrick scott barnes

Inside:

Space Exploration  
and Exploitation

America's Ritual  
Genocide of Iraq

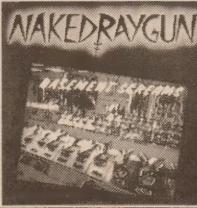
Urine and the Quest  
for Employment



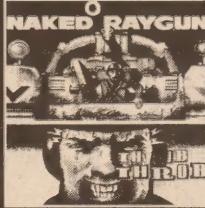
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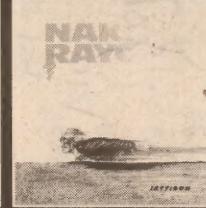
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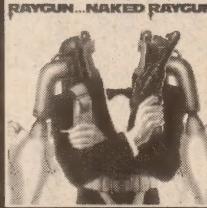
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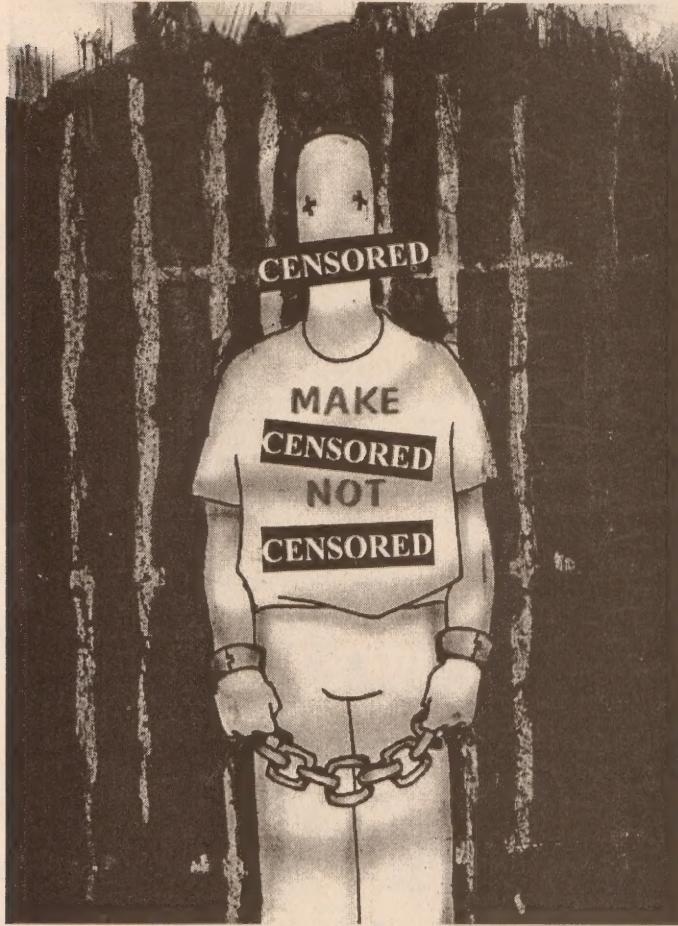
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# things within

IMPACT PRESS • ISSUE 22 • AUGUST/SEPT. '99



## Prisoners of Conscience

by Morris Sullivan and Patrick Scott Barnes

When we think of political prisoners we think of Chinese and Cuban prisons. But America's jails are gradually becoming the home of many outspoken, socio/political figures who have ended up imprisoned, mostly due to the U.S. government's fear of them.

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"Civilization is the progress toward a society of privacy. The savage's whole existence is public, ruled by the laws of his tribe. Civilization is the process of setting man free from men."

QUOTES

"And the day will come, when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the Supreme Being as His Father, in the womb of a virgin, will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerva, in the brain of Jupiter." -- Thomas Jefferson

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**Fun fact of the Issue:** Up to the age of six or seven months a child can breathe and swallow at the same time. An adult cannot do this.

"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education." - Thomas Jefferson



## **From The Editor**

Emotions can be triggered daily, by news, information, crime, deceit, irresponsibility. Bottled, packaged and stored in our systems, they sit and multiply with each new aggravation. Along comes a group of people who won't let those emotions get compounded internally. Instead they act, despite how they may be taken. "Outspoken activists are radicals looking for attention," some may say.

But we, the outspoken, know better. Feel better. Expressing our anger—at the world, its people, government, pollution, ignorance, racism, destructive behavior, manifest destiny that ignores the lines of personal responsibility and equality—helps us feel better.

We don't feel that we are better than others, at least we shouldn't. We feel better about ourselves. Because, when activism becomes a holier-than-thou lifestyle, it loses its purpose, its ability to be genuine and effective. It becomes a contest and that's not what it's about.

It's about taking it as far as you want. Be active, but only to the point that you think is best. When you start changing your lifestyle out of obligation it can only end up being destructive. To change, you must really want to...for yourself and no one else. But, as people living, surviving, reacting or being reacted to, we must act.

Our voices must be heard. Don't shout louder than you want. But let them hear you. You don't have to form a protest march against the local fur shop, you can write

them a letter. If you're having moral conflicts over eating animal products, start by stopping eating meat and go vegan gradually.

Activism isn't a badge to wear, it's a means to an end—of racism, animal cruelty, police brutality, government waste, corporate welfare, war, the drug war...find your cause and lead the charge. But if you just sit idly as things around you irritate, upset and anger you the only blame you can place is on yourself.

-- **Craig Mazer, Editor**

### **Need some help getting started?**

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<http://www.studentactivism.org/>

**Feminist activism links**  
<http://feminist.com/activ.htm>

**Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting**  
<http://www.fair.org/>

**Activism 2000 - Youth activism**  
<http://www.youthactivism.com/>

**Activist topics and info**  
<http://www.ecomall.com/activism/menu.htm>

**Activism.net has several issues covered**  
<http://www.activism.net/>

**Amnesty Int'l - Protecting human rights**  
<http://www.amnesty.org/>

**People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals**  
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# Speak Your Mind. . .

Please proof your letters. IMPACT will do the best to decipher them. However, we appreciate your effort to avoid us having to do extra work. Thanks!

**Dear Lover of Big Butts (re: "Mind Power")**

by Patrick Scott Barnes, Issue #17 - Oct/Nov '98:

I hope that you find and connect with a woman who is compassionate and loves life. I think that you said a lot in your article about interracial dating and marriage but that people aren't ready to hear it. No matter what color their skin is. Racial prejudice isn't limited to one color. I like to think that the younger generation will be more open-minded than the previous, but that remains to be seen.

-- Anonymous

**Editor:**

After reading yet another of Patrick Scott Barnes' confrontational and misanthropic essays ("Mind Power - The N-word", Issue #21 - June/July '99), I have come to the conclusion that he is as much of a racist as those he demonizes. By succumbing to the same type of meaningless finger-pointing and stereotyping he is complaining about, he brings the problem of racism yet another step away from a solution. From the first sentence which calls Wal-Mart 'Massas Plantation' to the final statement about white hip-hop stars, he insults all people, white or otherwise, attempting to abolish prejudice any way they can. Assuming for a moment that he does not hold a management position, he is as much a "wage slave" as any one of a thousand (or more) workers at his level; making him no better or worse than those who are white, Hispanic, or female.

I have no great love for Wal-Mart, or large, greedy corporations in general. I also know that there is much racism and gender inequality in most aspects of American life. Even so, much has been done to help fix these problems, and there is still a long

way to go. As a white male, I have white, black, male, female, straight, and gay friends. I do not differentiate as to color or sex, and I feel all people are deserving of a chance to show their true colors; that of a hard worker, a poet, an artist, or even a misogynist. Mr. Barnes obviously feels differently. Because I am white, I am, in his mind, the problem, even though I have no real power, other than activism, to put him down or raise him up.

In my mind, "The Problem" is ignorance. Mr. Barnes does nothing to dispel this, as in essay after essay he does not try to educate so much as complain about "whitey" (his word), while ignoring the fact of black-on-black racism, Puerto Rican-on-Cuban racism, or any of the other types of hatred and hate crimes perpetuated by the human race.

Mr. Barnes has a forum, and a responsibility. But until he starts trying to dispel misconceptions and attempts to educate instead of berate his audience, he is part of the problem. The use of the "N-word" is abhorrent in any group of people, regardless of its pronunciation, as well as any number of other racial slurs which we all know far too well. Yes, I understand that African-Americans feel they use it to take the sting out of it, but in reality it just angers those who would like to see the word eradicated from the lexicon. The time for pushing our horrible past in our collective, white or black, faces is past. Now is the time for solutions. If Mr. Barnes wishes to do nothing but display his hatred and anger towards whites for being born white, that is his right, but he is no better than a Klan member who hates blacks for being born black.

Thank you, Mr. Barnes, for speaking out. Now, try giving us some solutions.

Corby Kennard

**Dear Editor:**

Mr. Sullivan has truly picked a subject ("Art Censorship in America", Issue #21 - June/July '99) close to me this time (I'm an art student). It really disturbs me how eager certain authority figures are to throw the Constitution out the window in order to stifle anything that displeases them, and I'm not just talking about "extreme" art, either.

Last year in St. Louis, a well known black artist had one of his paintings rejected from an exhibit. Entitled "Somali Rose", it depicted a very attractive African woman with breasts bared. Apparently this was too much for the general public to handle, seeing as how the public wasn't even consulted in regards to the painting's removal.

This is just example of many that shows just how uptight we are becoming as a nation. When is it going to occur to people that all this knee-jerk bullshit isn't going to solve anything? It isn't even going to make people feel more secure; quite the opposite, I should think.

Steve Moutray

**IMPACT:**

Thanks for your courage in printing the article "The Cost of a Full Stomach" by Craig Mazer (Issue #21, June/July '99).

I am a new reader of your publication and supporter of animal rights. Please continue to publish articles that speak in supports of animals.

Sincerely,  
Mary Crosthwaite

**More letters on next page**

# Speak Your Mind. . .

Please proof your letters. IMPACT will do the best to decipher them. However, we appreciate your effort to avoid us having to do extra work. Thanks!

## IMPACT:

Many thanks from a relatively new reader for another great issue (#21, June/July '99). To tell the truth, I'm just as affected by what I read in the daily papers these days - and who wouldn't be - but I often feel that the free press can use the feedback a lot more.

Props go to Sean Helton for his usual dose of observational humor in "Your World." Believe me, a zine as heavy as yours tends to be can use more of that sort of thing. Thanks also to K. Shreeram for filling in some of the blanks about Kosovo, and to Morris Sullivan for having the balls to own up to his critical biases ("Notes from the Cultural Wasteland"). Things like that should go without saying if you write for a sociopolitical zine, but still - refreshing. I'd

like to hope that Mr. Sullivan knows damn well why you don't see 'reviews about doctors or hardware stores' as opposed to the arts. People can usually figure out for themselves if they've been overcharged or gotten otherwise shafted at a store, and word spreads. The arts, on the other hand, are subject to interpretation for those too lazy to form their own opinions. This creates a job for the critic in much the same way that American society creates a market for 'The Clapper.'

I'd go on, but then I'd be criticizing a critical article about critics, and I don't know how much further you can get your head up your ass than that. Anyway, thanks again for the thoughts and keep them coming.

Tod Caviness

Dear IMPACT,

Yikes, I picked up an Impact Press here in Asheville, NC, and at first thought it was a radical magazine. Then I read your article about stupidity and idiocy ("Your World" by Sean Helton, Issue #20, April/May '99) and was depressed to see that you could criticize others and not "get it" yourself.

If you find it unnerving to walk the meat aisle, you should try walking around the factory farms and slaughterhouses! The animals you eat were most likely tortured from the day they were born until their gruesome ending at the slaughterhouse. There they are hung upside-down and have their throats slit and are dismembered, often while fully conscious. Aw, shucks, I am so sorry that you find it "quite unnerving" walking down the meat aisle, I guess you should skip over to the toy aisle so you don't have your nice day tarnished.

Your attitude is no different than a pedophile saying, "I know it's not right, but I'm hooked on a good 6 year old f%\$# every now and then and can't stop, so don't bother me."

Have a nice day.

Stewart David  
Asheville, NC



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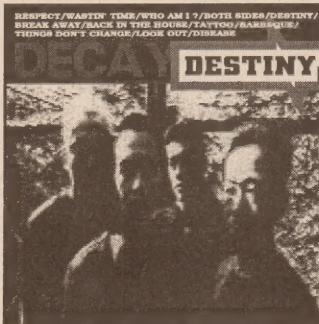
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# Notes from the Cultural Wasteland

by morris sullivan.  
morris sullivan.



I've been thinking a lot lately about the end of the world. There are a couple of reasons for that: First, I'm writing a play for a student acting workshop that takes place after the end of the world. Second, it seems like every time I turn on the television or pick up a magazine, there's some media maven prognosticating that the end is near.

For example, I was working long hours last week, trying to meet some deadlines and finish my own little post-apocalyptic script. I decided to take a break, so I poured a glass of tea, sat down on the couch, picked up my remote and turned on the tube.

My television is almost permanently set on Fox, because about the only thing I ever watch any more is "The Simpsons." Life without cable is hard. At first, I thought I'd screwed up and turned on the religious channel. Fox was airing a show called "Signs from God." A self-proclaimed journalist was telling about his adventures in Bolivia, where he met a woman who occasionally bleeds from her hands, feet, and forehead, re-experiencing Christ's pain of crucifixion.

For some reason, "Jesus" (with whom the Bolivian woman was on a first-name basis) had decided not to appear on cue, but invited the film crews to come back a few days later, when he'd be ready to make his appearance. Sure enough, the film crews returned on schedule and the stigmata appeared as promised.

"Interesting," I thought. "God has finally decided to use the television media to get his point across. Either that, or the woman is nuts. Or, of course, the 'journalist' might be fudging a little. After all, it would be a much less interesting show if the stigmata had not appeared. What would they title the show then—'No Signs from an Indifferent God'?"

Now, how does a television news magazine follow an act like the miraculous appearance of the stigmata? This show's producers managed to come up with a pretty good second act—complete with tornadoes, earthquakes, mudslides, volcanoes, and other "acts of God." It seems that there have been more catastrophic acts of God in this decade than any other decade this century.

I went back to work, convinced that the world would end in a few months.

I was tired, though, and after a night's sleep, I reconsidered. There are some problems with the "end is near" scenario. First, we all

know that television news magazines are not always totally accurate. Even if this show held to the highest possible standards of journalistic integrity, one might still question the credibility of the statistics.

There's an old saying: "Figures don't lie, but liars figure." We all know that the government can and does twist statistics for its own purposes, like to make a failing economy look healthier than it really is, to make a crime rate appear smaller, etc. Only a fool trusts statistics he didn't himself generate, and even then a wise person only trusts them a little bit.

What of the stigmata-suffering woman? The Catholic Church has documented only a few genuine examples of stigmata, and they didn't jump at the chance to document this one. One might wonder if "Jesus" decided to reveal himself to us, why would he choose to do so through a middle-aged Bolivian woman. Why not someone important—like Bill Clinton or Bob Dylan?

And why would "Jesus" choose to make the stigmata appear near Good Friday? That's not the historical date of the crucifixion, anyway. Holidays fall where they do on the calendar based on a marketing decision—early Christians were losing followers to Mathraics, who had wisely decided to schedule their virgin births and miraculous resurrections to coincide with popular pagan drunk-fests.

There's more, too. If the four horsemen were to come visiting on this New Year's Eve, who among us will be "good" enough to be saved? Certainly not our politicians; damned few of them have even a tiny altruistic streak. In my experience, most politicians seem to mainly try to get in the way of people who are trying to actually do something good. Certainly not our high-profile religious leaders; most of them are con-men and degenerates.

There are a few people on earth that might seem good candidates for heaven. Most—the Dalai Lama, for instance—won't make it, though, because they aren't Christian.

Part of what the endgame predictors keep wailing about is true, though—humankind has fallen away from God, and for good reason. When a society's belief system no longer supports its happiness and productivity, it falls away to be replaced by a better belief system. That's what happened to the Roman empire, and that's what's happening to us.

(THE END, continued on page 44)

# The Backroom Words

This past July marks my fourth year as host of The Backroom Words, an open mic poetry/spoken word forum in downtown Orlando.

The Backroom Words is Central Florida's only weekly happening that exclusively caters to poetry. Other open mic forums cater to artists like musicians, but not us; we're exclusively for the poets.

The reason we're a 'poets-only' forum comes from The Backroom Words origins.

It used to be in Yab Yum, a downtown coffeehouse which is now called Harold and Maude's.

Back then, Yab Yum had a separate open mic for both spoken word and music. Spoken word was on Tuesday nights and music was on Wednesdays.

After three weeks of sub-hosting for a host that never showed up, I became the spoken word host the first week of July 1995. Actually, my first official night was July 4.

The readings weren't called The Backroom Words, then. It was just called The Spoken Word.

The name change came when both nights were moved to Yab Yum's next door sister operation, Go Lounge.

Since, a patron had to go to Go Lounge's back room to see entertainment, that's how three friends and I came up with the name.

Over my years as host, I've been called egoistic, racist, sexist, hostile and downright disrespectful towards poets.

Funny thing about all this is that I've seen white hosts of other open mics that have been worse. No one complained about them. A person didn't hear a whisper of criticism. But when the African-American screws up...can't have that.

Why are there always double standards for minorities? White males can get away with a dump truck load of mean-spiritedness but minorities can't.

Despite all the accusations, poets kept coming back.

One begins to wonder why is this so.

If I was such an evil person, why did the poets keep coming back?

I have made my screw-ups. Every host does. It's all a part of being human.

Still, the poets kept coming back.

Now, why is that?

The reason: The Backroom Words is Central Florida's only poetry forum where a person can say what they want to say without being harassed about it. That's the attraction, an uncensored forum.

I have always felt that this is how poetry readings should be

done. To have a healthy forum, a host must welcome all walks of life and all forms of poetry, even the kinds that suck.

I also feel that there is a socio-political necessity for uncensored readings.

Uncensored readings and other uncensored open mic venues are one of few entertainment venues that involves everyone. At venues such as these, a person has the option to either participate in the forum or be a spectator. If they choose to participate, they can do this without censoring themselves.

Seeing how Corporate America has almost absolute control over how we receive information, the attraction to an uncensored open mic forum is understandable.

A joke among my friend, Richard Miller, and I is, who's Orlando's most banned poet? I'm the number one poet and Richard is the second.

A year does not go by without us getting in trouble about our poetry.

Besides being kicked out of bookstores, we've even had someone call the police on us. Along with other spoken word artists and musicians, we were reading our poetry outside a Barnes' coffeehouse and someone that was in a neighboring business called the police.

My latest claim to fame, the one that puts me on top of the list, is having the mic turned off on me at Universal Studio's City Jazz.

The band, Umoja, invited me to read the poem, Hate Fire. Hate Fire is a semi-autobiographical poem dealing with racism.

I reworded the poem. I took out all the profanity (This is tourist town) but I left in the words "cracker" and "nigger". I felt they were necessary.

I read it during Umoja's final performance. Three-fourths through the poem, the powers that be turned off the mic and turned on the house lights.

This is why I am so glad that The Backroom Words still exists, because shit like that wouldn't happen at The Backroom Words.

After a year and a half of disrespect and then finally, being rudely kicked out of Go Lounge (We ain't forgot, motherfuckers!), The Backroom Words now exists at a downtown bar called Walk The Dog.

It's still on Tuesday nights and still welcomes all walks of life and all forms of poetry, even the kinds that suck.

# mind power



**Seeing how  
Corporate  
America has  
almost  
absolute  
control over  
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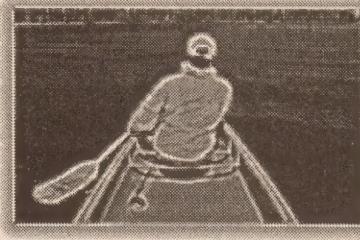
the News Revisited

by Sean Helton

Anyone know a quaint little place to go canoeing? If you said Standish, Michigan you're way ahead of me. Timothy Boomer, a computer programmer from Detroit, was convicted on Friday, June 11 for swearing. Yes, swearing. Boomer and some friends were canoeing the Rifle River in rural Arenac County when his canoe tipped over. He then let fly what has been described from "at worst an 'f-word' or two" to "using the 'f-word' anywhere between 25 and 70 times." Boomer told jurors when his canoe hit a rock and he fell into the river he didn't know there were children present, so he began shouting in jest. Unfortunately, he also didn't know about Arenac County's 102-year-old anti-swearing law, which prohibits swearing in front of children.

Boomer's attorney argued, as we all would, that the law is unconstitutional and is a blatant violation of his freedom of speech. The prosecutor in the case argued that while that type of language may be acceptable in Los Angeles or New York City, the jury should decide whether they wanted that kind of language in their small town. I thought for sure that argument would be used to Boomer's credit, as only an idiot would fall for it. (By the way, if you've ever wondered how intelligent the residents of Standish, Michigan are, there's your answer.)

So this means cities within America are above the Constitution of the United States and should be allowed to interpret it as they see fit? This is a gross injustice. I lived in a little podunk town in rural Georgia and I'll bet my bank account it's smaller than Standish. Yet there was cussing in my town. The kids had sex, we listened to heavy metal and some of us even failed classes. I think Rodney Woody even farted in public once, but I'm not sure. I wasn't there, I just heard from some kid whose sister's boyfriend's cousin heard it from someone.



NO town in America, no city, no county, no rural enclave, is above this country's laws, and for these hicks to convict Boomer is a crime in itself. The implications from this trial are even scarier than the verdict.

Thanks to these yahoos, now every God-fearing, virgin-eared conservative is going to press charges the first time they hear someone say "dang." Every time Mrs. Jones and her kids are in the body shop and Joe Greaseball rakes his knuckles over some lug nuts, he's going to spout some profanity and wham! Lawsuit. And don't think it won't happen. There are people in this country who were waiting for a case just like this to come down. Sit back and watch, it's gonna be fucking fun. (Oh come on, you knew it was coming.)

If you're responsible and you know it, clap your hands! Ahhh, listen to that applause. Thank you, thank you very much. Really though, responsibility seems to be a dying trait these days. Americans have become so hasty in passing the blame that finding a responsible person is just about as hard as finding the "Boardwalk" piece in McDonalds' Monopoly game. (And don't give me that "I had it but lost it" bit. It's been done.) Back in late June a woman in Tampa, Florida took it upon herself to start an organization called "Swim For Life" after her son drowned in April of this year. Mary Bettis began lobbying local governments to require swim lessons for young children. I'm not sure of the specifics of Ms. Bettis' story, and it hasn't been disclosed as to who will fund her new program, but, with all due respect, it's not a problem America needs to confront or pay for.

Children drown not because they can't swim. They drown because parents have lost their sense of responsibility. Even if it wasn't Ms. Bettis' fault directly, even if her son died while in the care of someone else — that is still irresponsibility. Too many children today are being born and turned over to a day care center six weeks later. What's the point of having a children if you can't be there to protect them? "Why not?" isn't the answer to "Why do you want children?"



So many couples get married and start popping out kids before their marriage license has been filed. They don't think about things like working and having a latchkey child. They don't think about their child when they go house hunting and pick the one with the pool. So let's make America responsible for it. I'm not capable of taking the blame so let me blame my country. OK, while you're at it, how about we fund a federal babysitting program? We can have federally appointed and certified nannies who will go to school and be bonded to change diapers, heat milk (or soymilk, you damned vegans!) and burp your child.

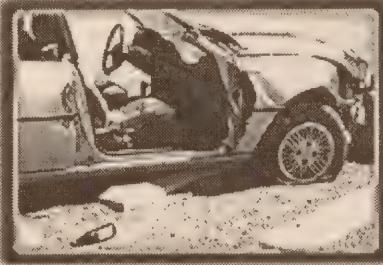
That way we won't have to read stories about moms like Andrea Wells of Pompano Beach, Florida. Wells, a mother of nine, burned her son with an iron, pricked the bottom of his feet with some type of object, put welts on his back and broke his hand. How about Ronald Shanabarger of Franklin, Indiana? Shanabarger wrapped his eight-month-old son's head in plastic wrap and walked away. He returned 20 minutes later, removed the wrap and placed his dead son face down in a crib for his wife to discover. If we start anything, let's start a mandatory training course for parents. When a woman becomes pregnant, she (and her significant other, if applicable) must enroll in a seven month course on how to care for a kid. Everything from feeding to diapers to discipline to Little League to grandchildren. Or we can continue to pass the blame like Randy and Kathy Atchison of Palm Harbor, Florida who recently crusaded to get a mandatory chicken pox vaccination for all children entering preschool and kindergarten in Florida. The Atchison's son died of chicken pox last year but more tragic than that is the fact that the Atchison's didn't know such a vaccine even existed. PARENTAL TRAINING!!! Let's get back to basics. When we learn to care for our own then we can think about taking on the added responsibility of "America's" children.

Not only do we have to re-learn responsibility, we also must come to the realization that

things happen and sometimes there is no reason. Sometimes life deals you lemons and even the lemonade you make tastes like shit. Take the "killer pond" in Celebration, Florida for example. Celebration is

surrounded by wetlands and in the wake of its development many retention ponds were created. One such retention pond has now claimed the lives of four people. The bodies of three tourists and their truck were pulled from the pond back in June after they had been missing for nine months. The men were vacationing in Florida from Massachusetts and had seemingly disappeared. In November of last year 18 year-old Sarah Ann Kuser drove into the pond and died as well. Now the Kuser family is suing Celebration for not properly marking the road, never mind the fact that alcohol was involved in Sarah's death and police estimate she was traveling at speeds in excess of 70 mph when she crashed. It's very questionable that the lawsuit has just been filed yet she died some seven months ago. I wonder why this case wasn't filed sooner. Is it because, oh, I don't know, there was no case?

Well, guess what? There's still no case! The family is suing because they think they have a strong suit with the recent discovery of the three men from Massachusetts. They probably based their decision on one other, small detail: The Celebration Company is a subsidiary of Disney and everyone wants some of that action. This is a horrible thing to do. It is a tragedy that the family lost their daughter, but using her death for their monetary gain is even worse.



Although the families of the men from Massachusetts haven't filed suit (at press time) you can almost guarantee it will happen. Similar to the Kuser case, the men were speeding. The Florida Highway Patrol estimates their speed at impact at 60 m.p.h. They were traveling fast enough to launch their truck some 100 feet into the air where it hit and flipped over. Still, with all of these facts, the blame continues to be passed on.

Howard Russell, a former director of Osceola county's Public Works department said, "When you realize you've got a condition where people are coming...from where they've been partying, you want to take measures to make conditions more visible." WHY?! Why should anyone take added precautions for assholes who drive drunk?! (I was hit by a drunk driver so I'm a little sensitive to this.) Russell went on to say, "If you're going 35 to 45 mph, there's no problem at all." So let me get this straight: if you're sober and following the posted speed limit you'll be fine, but if you're driving drunk and speeding, you might get hurt or even killed? That sounds about right.

Recently, Osceola County Commissioner, Ken Shipley, decided to get some of the limelight. He is petitioning to get the roadway closed entirely. He argues that, "I'm not a traffic engineer or a road guru, cut common sense says that stretch of road needs to be condemned and redone..." What about the people that die on our interstates

(WORLD, continued on page 44)

## Radical Punk 'n Oi!



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# over-priced musings

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## A new pair of shoes for the slippery slope of Christianity...

Christ was not executed by lethal injection. Well, why not?

Despite the lack of research into the human body to determine a "humane" way to kill another human being, it was a first-century custom to execute enemies of the state by crucifixion. In these quasi-enlightened times, crucifixion is cruel and unusual punishment, and will never be administered by any nation lest the United Nations intervene and impose sanctions against the offending regime responsible.

Beowulf did not fight Grendel with a B-2 Stealth Bomber. Well, why not?

Admittedly, it would have been a much more efficient way of dispatching Grendel. It was simply that the seventh-century mind lacked the understanding of the world necessary to design such powerful weapons of destruction which allow one to set his or her enemies on fire from the air.

The pilgrims did not set sail to colonize Plymouth Rock on the QE2. Well, why not?

The QE2 is a phat ride. Unfortunately, human advancement in areas of shipbuilding and means of propulsion at the time had not allowed passage on any ship greater than the dingy Mayflower.

We no longer draw our solar system using fanciful "epicycles" to explain the apparent circular movement of the planets in the sky. Well, why not?

Here's why not: This phenomenon has been explained by our own planet's revolution around the sun relative to others, us no longer being the center of the universe.

We don't do things the way we did in past centuries. We can't. Obsolescence is a bitch. Advancements in the way we believe and understand the world have made our previous notions about

micro and macrocosms a memory. Any assumptions made about universal mechanics in previous eras must be scrutinized and challenged always, for otherwise we remain stagnant; the world remains flat, the stars remain fixed.

Nonetheless, it is somewhat of a prerequisite for admission into the exclusive club of most denominations of Christianity to accept all the first-century perspectives and assertions contained within the Bible as incontrovertible truth, despite the vast array of conflicting views and agendas in its pages.

Now the obvious reason for the Bible's longstanding resilience to the decay of time and science is the broad array of universal truths contained within. Expression of divine, universal, unconditional love is appealing to anyone in any age, and such beauty cannot be destroyed any

more than the human capacity to love can be. But along with the gracious, wise passages of Ecclesiastes and Psalms come the confusing, contradictory books of Exodus and Leviticus, books whose relevance to the universe we know and the loving God Christians profess to worship today are simply dwindling.

Don't misunderstand this article as an attempt to excise portions of the Bible which are unfit for the almighty intellect of Pflaster. I'm certainly no revisionist, and I think these books should remain a part of scripture as a marker. It should solidly remind us of what those who came before us endured in their quest to fathom the ethereal. But never, two thousand years later, should we accept these limited first-century views of how God imposes his will upon the poor souls of the earth.

I have a new favorite person in religious circles. He is John Shelby Spong, Episcopalian bishop of Newark, New Jersey, and author of *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism*. In his books he tackles these egregiously unbelievable passages in the Bible and calls for a new reformation of Christianity which sees beyond them. Following are just a few absurdities, contradictions, and atrocities which he brings to light.

God orders the sun to stand still in the sky so that the Israelites could finish killing the Amorites (Joshua 10:12-13.) Despite the nationalistic view of God in this bible story, we now know that the sun does not travel around the earth, rather the earth rotates on its axis. If the earth were to suddenly stop spinning, if only for an hour, the force of gravity would destroy the ecology of the earth irreparably.

The Torah said "do not steal," but Moses commands the Israelites by the word of Yahweh to rob the Egyptians of all their valuables in order to finance the Exodus from Egypt. (Exod. 12:35-36) Does a god who authorizes this sort of thing and chooses one group of people over another deserve our respect, worship, and reverence? Or was it perhaps the delusions of first-century minds, the historical victors who believed themselves to be "God's chosen" simply because they won?

No one was allowed to be a priest who had a physical deformity, or who was a dwarf, or blind, or lame, or a hunchback, or had a disease, crushed testicles, or scabs. (Lev. 22:16-22) We now know scientific reasons for these abnormalities, and no longer believe such persons to be Satan's agents. Nor do we believe, as Jesus is professed to have believed, that deaf muteness is caused by a tying of the tongue by Satan. (Matt 9:32)

Jesus rose into the sky after the resurrection. This makes sense in a time when the sky is a giant canopy over a long, vast, flat ground, where stars in the sky are holes behind which lies the eternal day of heaven. The ascension story is told by Luke in the book of Acts, and in his time, Luke could never have comprehended the sheer size of space. Even if Jesus had risen into the sky at the speed of light, he still today wouldn't have left our own galaxy.

We are just beginning to understand scientifically that homosexuality is not an act of evil, but is in fact an ingrained trait in humans and animals alike. There are of course many passages in the bible which explicitly forbid homosexuality (Lev. 20:13, for example). But placed in context, the commandment which states that you shouldn't covet your neighbor's wife says nothing about coveting your neighbor's husband. In that time and culture, it was acceptable for men to possess many wives, and "coveting" refers not so much to emotional involvement or sexual gratification, but more to the theft of property – which is pretty much what women were.

Moses was angry that the Israelites allowed the Midianite women to live after killing every Midianite male, so he ordered all the non-virgin women to be killed, and allowed Israeli men to take all the virgins for themselves. (Numbers 31:15)

Our concepts of lifestyles, sex, science, government, human rights, and nature have taken enormous leaps and bounds since the days of servitude and angry Gods watching us. It is obvious that a grand re-evaluation is definitely in order.

When the claims of first-century prophets are applied to the world today, they fall extremely short of satiating the most basic and honest of questions. They cause anger and hostility in the minds of Christians who subscribe to these truths, as we've seen in past *Impact* articles, as such fundamentalists grapple desperately onto the crumbling cliffs of ancient belief. In addition, grasping antiquated truths prevent such persons from discovering new and beautiful things about the universe, creating a mental block against science and learning, and drowning them in seas of tired rhetoric.

Quoth Spong:

Unless theological truth can be separated from pre-scientific understandings and rethought in ways consistent with our understanding of reality, the Christian faith will be reduced to one more ancient mythology that will take its place alongside the religions of Mount Olympus. Those who

(*RELIGION*, continued on page 44)

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# Space Exploration and Exploitation

## What kind of seed will we take from Earth?

In our present age we often hear the name of Christopher Columbus used to describe the current stage of space exploration. NASA and other promoters of space travel regularly use the Columbus mythology to create a sense of excitement and high adventure about the challenge of space.

But behind the excitement of adventure, just as in the time of Columbus, lies the hidden layer of exploitation. Like Queen Isabella of Spain, who paid for the Columbus trip in hopes of greater economic rewards, there are forces in our world today lining up to harvest the benefits from the exploitation of the outer reaches.

One such force is the organization called the United Societies in Space. Declan O'Donnell, a director, has stated, "We are the Fifth Force in nature. Our society turned loose in the universe...will represent a new natural force. Our mansions can be built with a new source of financing, priming the pump for private enterprise."

In his book *Mining the Sky: Untold Riches from the Asteroids, Comets, and Planets*, NASA scientist John S. Lewis paints a picture of enormous profits to be made by the nation that controls the territory on the Moon, Mars, or other planetary bodies. These planetary bodies, he maintains, contain the untapped resources and riches of the future. Lewis, going beyond the Columbus mythology says, "...The global expansion of European technology and civilization brought about by the terrestrial age of exploration is but a pale foreshadowing of the opportunities before us as humans move out into space."

### WHO WILL OWN THE MOON?

A January 1995, New York Times op-ed piece by science writer Lawrence Joseph entitled *Who Will Mine the Moon?*, introduces us to the rare gas called helium 3 and asks the telling question "Will the Moon become the Persian Gulf of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?" Mr. Joseph raises the call to arms with his conclusion, "If we ignore the potential of this remarkable fuel, the nation could slip behind in the race for control of the global economy, and our destiny beyond."

Numerous voices, at NASA and from private industry, are now calling for immediate action. David Gump, president of LunaCorp, recently made the case in a Space News piece when he said, "Commercial activities should be building blocks of the first lunar base, rather than afterthoughts. Discovery of the fabulously valuable buried ice fields at the Moon's poles has dramatically increased the value of a lunar base, and the logic of a primary role for free enterprise."

By Bruce K. Gagnon  
art by Marty Kelley

Much of the ground work for space exploitation is now being laid. The surface of the Moon has already been mapped by the Clementine mission (which also tested Star Wars sensors at the same time). Lunar rovers are soon expected to drill for samples of lunar ice at the Moon's north pole.

NASA's current series of missions to Mars are undertaking similar efforts. The Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft is now beginning a year-long mapping mission. Other landers in 2001 and 2003 will begin doing soil identification and sampling. If all goes as planned, a Mars Sample Return mission will bring back approximately 300 grams of soil and rock to Earth in 2008.

Potential dangers do exist though. Barry DiGregorio, author and founder of the International Committee Against Mars Sample Return, has written that "...any Martian samples returned to Earth must be treated as biohazardous material until proven otherwise." At the present time NASA has taken no action to create a special facility to handle space sample returns. On March 6, 1997 a report issued by the Space Studies Board of the National Research Council recommended that such a facility should be operational at least two years prior to launch of a Mars Sample Return mission. Reminding us of the Spanish exploration of the Americas, and the smallpox virus they carried that killed thousands of indigenous people, DiGregorio warns that the Mars samples could "contain pathogenic viruses or bacteria."

There are vast deposits of mineral resources like magnesium and cobalt believed to be on Mars. In June of 1997, NASA announced plans for manned mining colonies on Mars, expected around 2007-2009. The mining colonies, NASA says, would be powered by nuclear reactors launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

### NUKES IN SPACE

Nuclear power has become the power source of choice for NASA. Not only has NASA, and the Department of Energy (DoE), been promoting the use of nuclear power for on-board generators for deep space missions, but there is growing evidence that the space exploration and exploitation "adventure" will soon be awash in nuclear materials.

According to Marshall Savage, the founder of the First Millennial Foundation (a pro-space colonization organization), "We really can't mess up the Moon, either by mining it or building nuclear power plants. We can ruthlessly strip mine the surface of the Moon for centuries and it will be hard to tell we've even been there. There is no reason why we cannot build nuclear power plants on the Moon's surface with impunity. Equipped with limitless nuclear power, the

lunar civilization will be capable of prodigious rates of economic growth." One cannot help but wonder what would happen to the poor Moon miner who becomes contaminated by radioactive dust after removing his irradiated space suit inside the lunar habitat.

There is a growing call as well for the nuclear rocket to Mars. Already work is underway on the project at Los Alamos Labs in New Mexico and at the University of Florida Nuclear Engineering Department. In his Space News op-ed called Nuclear Propulsion to Mars, aerospace industry engineer Robert Kleinberger states that the nuclear rocket "could be used for defending U.S. space systems, reboosting the International Space Station, returning to the Moon for exploration or mining, and for exploring and opening the inner solar system to scientific research. The nuclear vehicle could even assist in the eventual colonization of Mars."

In fact, there is such a growing demand for plutonium for "space projects" that the DoE is now undertaking an internal review of its production process. The DoE is considering re-opening plutonium processing lines at such facilities as Hanford in Washington state, a site that has created enormous contamination during its years of bomb making.

## GET RID OF SPACE LAW?

One of the current obstacles to NASA and corporate plans for exploitation of the Moon and Mars is the existence of United Nations (U.N.) laws like the Moon Treaty. Much of the Moon Treaty reiterates earlier and internationally accepted "space law," particularly the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. In that treaty, in Article 11, the U.N. states that "the Moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of mankind."

Former Apollo astronaut Harrison Schmitt, a key proponent of Moon mining for helium 3, has called the Moon Treaty "Not a wise idea". He wrote in a July 1998, Space News article that "the mandate of an international regime would complicate private commercial efforts and give other countries political control over the permissibility, timing and management of all private commercial activities."

Efforts are now underway at several levels to rid the world of pesky and restricting international law that would hamper corporate access and control of "untold riches" in space. Lawrence D. Roberts, a member of the National Space Society Policy Committee wrote in that organization's magazine, Ad Astra, in 1997 that "If the Outer Space Treaty is to be adhered to, and the international fallout from a new standard is to be minimized, some kind of international ap-

proach is needed. By limiting the number of states involved in the process, the prospects for a rapid agreement are dramatically improved.... It may even be possible to accelerate the timetable by promoting federal legislation that sets the standards for property claims in advance of any international agreement."

## A BAD SEED

Just as Queen Isabella sent in the Spanish Armada to protect the new found territory and resources of the New World, so too is the U.S. moving in a similar way. The Pentagon, through the U.S. Space Command, is working hard to ensure that the space corridor will remain open and free for private corporate interests. Weapon systems such as nuclear powered lasers and anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons are now being funded, researched, and tested in the U.S. It will only be a matter of time until deployment of space based weapons will follow. In the Space Command's document, Vision for 2020, they state that "Historically, military forces have evolved to protect national interests and investments – both military and economic. During the rise of sea commerce, nations built navies to protect and enhance their commercial interests. ...The control of space will encompass protecting U.S. military, civil and commercial investments in space.... Control of space is the ability to assure access to space, freedom of operations within the space medium, and an ability to deny others the use of space, if required." A parallel, military highway will be created between the Earth and the planets beyond. Documents commissioned by the U.S. Congress suggest that U.S. military bases on the Moon will enable the U.S. to control access to and from the planet Earth. The logo of the U.S. Space Command is "Master of Space."

We are now poised to take the bad seed of greed, environmental exploitation and war into space. Having shown such enormous disregard for our own planet Earth, the so-called "visionaries" and "explorers" are now ready to rape and pillage the heavens. Countless launches of nuclear materials, using rockets that regularly blow up on the launch pad, will seriously jeopardize life on Earth. Returning potentially bacteria-laden space materials back to Earth, without any real plans for containment and monitoring, could create new epidemics for us. The possibility of an expanding nuclear-powered arms race in space will certainly have serious ecological and political ramifications as well. The effort to deny years of consensus around international space law will create new global conflicts and confrontations.

(*SPACE*, continued on page 44)

# a TICKET TO RIDE

BY TIM PELLER  
ART BY MARTY KELLEY

I don't often watch prime time "news" shows on network TV, but the other night by accident I surfed in to one. The particular segment caught my interest because it was about ticket brokering for rock concerts, specifically for a New York City Billy Joel gig.

As such shows tend to do, this one attempted to impact the viewers by packaging the segment as a human-interest story. The camera and narrative followed a New Jersey College student, a dedicated Joel fan, in his effort to obtain front row seats at Madison Square Garden.

Predictably, the young man, despite being the first in line at a Ticketmaster outlet, is thwarted in his bid for a ticket. Only the goodwill of another ticket buyer allows him to obtain a seat somewhere in the ionosphere. Most of the "good" tickets are scooped up by "diggers," paid employees of ticket brokers. These \$38 tickets will be resold for as much as \$400. Hey, let's rock n roll and go hungry next week or forego a semester of college.

What's wrong with this picture? Isn't unlimited capitalism what this country is all about? What about the alleged access that these ticket brokers are allowed, something that Ticketmaster, of course, denies? Where does all of this leave the "real" fans?

Besides the time in '77 when we nearly got pushed under the front of the stage at a Black Sabbath concert, I've rarely had great concert seats. In '85 when the Springsteen tour hit the area, we were lucky enough to get VIP seating in Greensboro, through a city employee. There we sat amidst a throng of the well heeled who prior

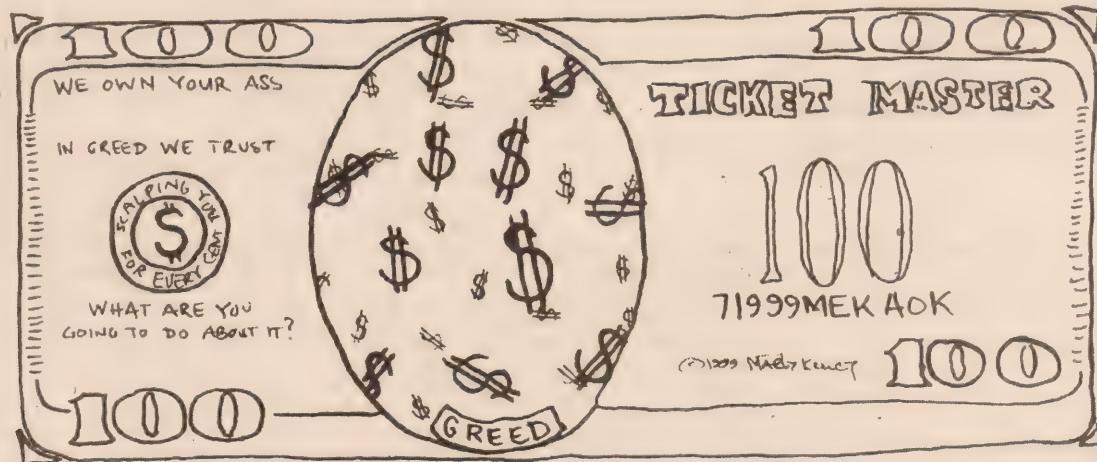
to the show discussed their various flight plans for the upcoming week. They were simply caught up in the humdrum of their ordinary expectations. We were kids in a candy store. And the whole idea of the privileged riffraff consuming all the best seating at this "blue-collar rock n roll" show made for a grand piece of irony.

So where is the practice of ticket brokering taking us? Billy Joel noted in the news segment that he is so disgusted with it that this may have been his last show. In fact, the network cameras showed his road crew skirting through the rafters to relocate enthusiastic young fans to his personally reserved front row seats. Otherwise, he fears he may have a situation like that at the Dean Dome where the "wine and cheese" elders occupy much of the "cheering" section.

So what is the solution to this problem? Joel, a music veteran by any standard, and certainly no dummy, can't figure it out. Pearl Jam, one the better pop-rock bands of the 90's was all but ruined by the process. Since our society tends to protect predators, it's unlikely that ticket brokering will be made illegal on a federal level.

Perhaps we could hold a Shirley Jackson style lottery for ticket brokers and stone one of them each year on a warm, sunny June day. This might at least add some risk to their field. Of course, the irony would be that brokers would corral the lion's share of tickets to this event, making it just another point of privilege.

In closing, many people in rock 'n' roll have sold out over the years, but very few have done as much damage to the spirit of the music and fans as those, whether they be ticket brokers or artists, that have inflated the cost of live shows to ridiculous levels.



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# PRIVACY LOST

The transfer of your personal information without your consent

By Jeffrey-John Nunziata, Iconoclast  
art by Eachean Edmundson

**YOU AND I EXIST.** There is nothing private or confidential about that. Where and when we were born is recorded and is a part of public records. The Supreme Court of the United States has established that we have sole control over our homes but not the information that comes to our mailboxes. Yeah, if you don't want sexual or erotic information from being mailed to your home you can sign a request at your post office, but otherwise, your mailbox is a free for all.

Now there is a way to avoid the bombardment of Junk mail but it is an all or nothing choice. Since 1971, the Direct Marketing Association has maintained a list of those of us who do not want to receive junk mail. But the catch is if you have your name on this list, you will never receive any type of catalogues or mailers. So you would not be able to even receive those catalogues you really want. There was a time when Equifax was planning to set up a system whereby you could only have your name on the lists of the places that you wanted to receive information from, but it was too overwhelming and they opted out.

You are probably wondering how specific mailings, those with your name on them, come to your address. It's not really all that difficult and believe it or not, you are more or less responsible for a large amount of the junk mail you receive.

Just for a moment stop to think about all of the junk mail that you have taken out of your mailbox. You may actually see a pattern developing. Have you ever subscribed to a magazine or bought something through the mail? Well there's a sort of domino effect that occurs once you place your name out there. You can begin to see a sort of trend developing in your junk mail if you examine it carefully. I subscribed to a certain skateboarding magazine. A short time afterwards, I began to notice mailings in my mailbox from certain skateboarding companies and some "alternative" clothing retailers. After some time I started to also receive catalogues for inline skating, surfing and BMX bikes.

That skateboarding magazine I subscribed to, they have a mailing list of all their subscribers. What they did was sell my name, along with the names of everyone else on their mailing list. They sold it to other skateboard businesses, and quite honestly, I didn't mind receiving their mail, but I did mind

the non-skateboarding mailings I began to receive in large quantities. I have never had an interest in inline skating, surfing or BMX but it did not matter. The marketing people from these companies know that many people into skateboarding are also interested in other "X-type" sports. Personally, I don't have an interest in any of those other sports and I think it's a waste of paper mailing them to me, but I did not have a choice.



(Hey kids, here's a neat and fun thing you can try at home. First I want you to close your eyes. Then I want you to picture a beautiful forest with lots of tall pretty green trees. Think about how beautiful and peaceful it is... Now I want you to picture a logging truck stacked with logs in a barren field of brown dirt and stumps. Now picture some of your junk mail that these trees have become. Look at all the pretty colors!)

Subscribing to magazines is not the only way to get your mailbox flowing with junk mail. Many other things that you do will create junk mail. Have you ever used your credit card to purchase something at a retail store? Many companies actually purchase this information to learn about your purchasing habits and then label you accordingly. It's the same with your debit card. These banks are actually developing profiles and if they sell this information with other companies, you become another statistic in a given category destined to receive junk mail for that specific profile. (There goes another tree, TIMBER!)

But besides junk mail, something more insidious is going on. Every time you make a purchase of anything and you use any form of card that identifies you... credit, debit, check cashing, frequent shopper/flyer/buyer etc., personal information about you is being collected, stored and possibly shared. Your name, address, phone number, age, race, sex, social security number, employer, annual income, debts and other information may be collected and transferred to others without your knowledge. Your privacy is being invaded day after day and you may not even have a clue.

(Hey kids here's another fun thing you can do at home. Picture yourself buying something with your credit/debit card. Picture a big super computer someplace recording that information. Now picture some one looking at your

Many businesses feel that to survive they need to collect data about you.

name and your information on a printed report.)

With all this transfer of information it is possible today for you to get involved in one of the biggest wars in all time. Yes, you may be another "victim" of the cola wars. It is possible for your point of sale information to be collected and for both Coke and Pepsi to know who is not drinking their life sustaining beverages. Their plan of attack is simple, flood the ignorant and unenlightened with coupons and advertisements until they give in. Coke even has its own "Coke card" to track you. It's marketed at young people and what better way than to win over converts at an early age.

Many businesses feel that to survive they need to collect data about you. This data includes information on your lifestyle, purchasing habits, where you shop, your credit history and sometimes even your political affiliations. You see, this information is considered quite valuable. Your name actually has a commercial value which companies are buying and selling. You and who you are have become a commodity. It may not seem that evil if it's a cola company trading your name and your personal information, but to what extent is our name and information about what we buy and what we do and what we read being used. Yeah even the books you buy with your credit cards are all recorded. Oh, you didn't think about that, did you.

But when all is said and done and more importantly, who is using this information about us and for what purpose? You may never

know. (Isn't it interesting how an article that started off about junk mail turned out to be something a bit unexpected? Kinda' like that last purchase you made with your credit card.)

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**ACLU** - privacy info and their Data Defense Kit  
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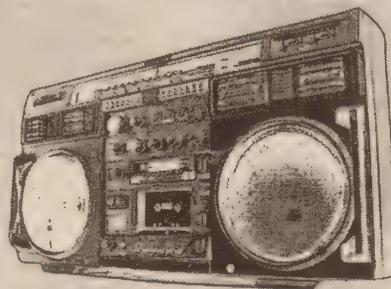
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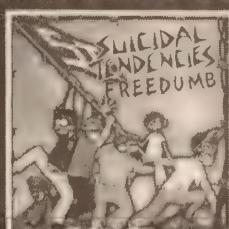
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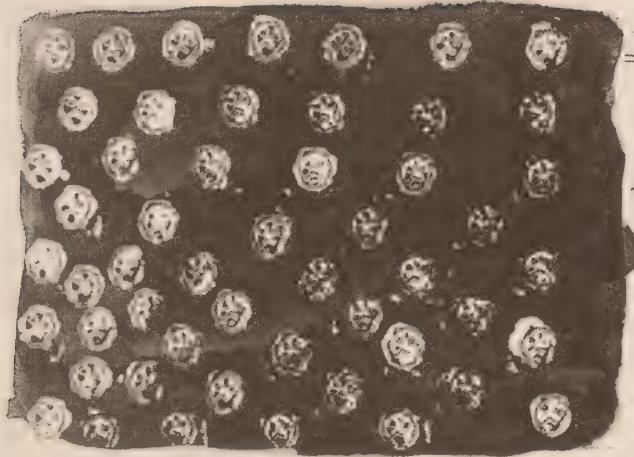
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# Prisoners of Conscience

## Imprisoned Fighters for Justice

by Morris Sullivan and Patrick Scott Barnes  
art by Marty Kelley

The story goes that Henry David Thoreau, the author of "Walden Pond" and other essays now on every high school reading list, sat in jail, imprisoned for protesting against an income tax, newly-enacted to finance a war. His friend Ralph Waldo Emerson came to visit him. Looking through the bars into Thoreau's cell, Emerson asked, "What are you doing in there, Henry?"

The better question, Thoreau replied, "is what are you doing out there?"

Civil disobedience has a long tradition in American history that begins with the Boston Tea Party. As the old cliché goes, it's as American as apple pie. Civil disobedience is the willful breaking of a law in order to protest that law. Cheating on your taxes is not civil disobedience; deliberately and publicly not paying your taxes—then going to jail for it—is. Smoking a joint is not civil disobedience, unless you do it on the courthouse steps.

Civil disobedience provided much of the fuel for the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. Rosa Parks, for example, refused to move to the back of a bus in order to protest the Jim Crow laws. Countless "unruly Negroes" sat at "whites only" lunch counters, demanding service until the law showed up to arrest them.

Also in the 50s, beat comic Lenny Bruce was arrested and briefly incarcerated for obscenity—for saying "fuck" in his standup routine. After the first episodes of police harassment, he deliberately used the word when cops showed up at his shows in order to get arrested and challenge the laws that forbade him to speak openly and freely.

Someone imprisoned for civil disobedience is, by definition, a politi-

cal prisoner. Not all political prisoners are arrested for civil disobedience, however.

From the turn of the century until the postwar years, labor organizers were frequently targeted for harassment and arrest. They were often framed for crimes, or crimes were committed during demonstrations that deteriorated into violence. The violence was often caused by the goon squads and strike-busters that showed up to stop the demonstrations, but it was usually the pro-labor activist who was arrested and charged.

A political prisoner is someone who is imprisoned because of his or her political or religious views. When most Americans think of political prisoners, we think of IRA soldiers doing time in Irish jails; of Nelson Mandela imprisoned for his actions against apartheid; of ant-Communist Russians wasting away on the Gulag Archipelago; or of a South American anti-Fascist guerilla.

Most of us naively believe that in our country, with our protective Bill of Rights, being imprisoned for political reasons is virtually impossible. However, in spite of government denials, there are nearly 100 political prisoners in the U.S., and up to 150 according to some sources.

The most famous political prisoner in America today is Mumia Abu-Jamal. A Philadelphia journalist, Abu-Jamal hosted various radio shows. Because of his attacks on police brutality and corrupt local politicians, he lost his journalistic assignments and was forced to become a cab-driver. One of his attacks was aimed at the police harassment of MOVE, a radical black organization founded in the early 1970s. MOVE was known for wearing dreadlocks and their use of profanity during political speeches.

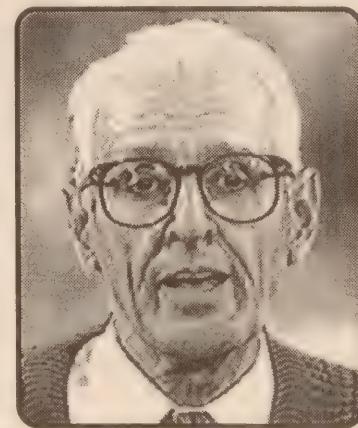
In 1978, the police had surrounded the MOVE headquarters, an action that resulted in violence, including the death of a police officer. Abu-Jamal criticized the police actions.

While driving his cab on December 9, 1981, Abu-Jamal was arrested, beaten by police, and charged with the murder of a police officer. During his trial, prosecutors used his connections with the Black Panthers and other political actions to appeal to an all-white jury. He was tried and sentenced to die in the electric chair.

His appeals to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court have been re-

peatedly denied, in spite of the fact that the evidence does not link him to the death of the officer. The prosecutors relied on Abu-Jamal's writings when, as a teenager, he was involved with the Black Panthers. Abu-Jamal is scheduled to die this year; many think that due to Pennsylvania's conservative political climate, his appeals will continue to be denied and he'll be executed.

Almost everyone in America has heard of Jack Kevorkian, the doctor of death who has publicly orchestrated dozens of assisted suicides. Kevorkian—and many other Americans—believe that when there is no hope for a cure for a painful disorder, a patient should have the right to terminate his or her own life. Unfortunately, the laws in most states disagree, and Kevorkian has been treated as a murderer.



**Jack Kevorkian**

At one time, Kevorkian quietly went about the business of assisting patients to commit suicide in a painless, foolproof, medically-sound way. However, his work became public, and Kevorkian used that as an opportunity to publicize the injustice of the laws that allow government to interfere in our own decisions about whether or not to terminate a painful, hopeless life.

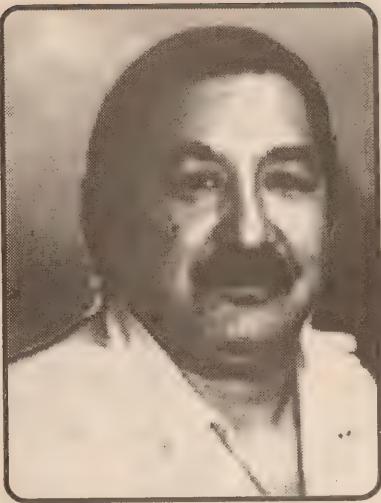
On April 12 of this year, the doctor was sentenced to 10-25 years for his "murderous" acts.

The controversy surrounding Kevorkian and his "suicide machine" is similar to what America underwent decades ago, when the rights of a family to terminate life support for a loved one was under debate. After similar acts of willfully breaking the law, court precedent finally helped change the laws that would have jailed the family member accused of such "mercy killing." The harder problem for Kevorkian, however, is that he has done more than simply "not support" a life—he assists in its termination.

The moral forces behind his conviction, however, are similar to those that denied the rights of family members to end life support, and they are related to those that oppose the rights to abortion. The arguments against Kevorkian come from a purely moralistic point of view, and the debate is over whether or not it is inherently "wrong" to terminate a human life—under any circumstances.

Without the moralistic arguments, there would be no legal support for jailing Kevorkian.

Leonard Peltier was a Native American activist who supposedly got into a shoot-out with the FBI's Cointelpro program. The pro-



**Leonard Peltier**

boots, and two FBI agents entered the reservation to search for him. They spotted several men in a red pickup truck, which pulled over. Shots were fired, but it has never been established who fired first. The situation exploded into a firefight between over 30 Indians and over 150 FBI agents, BIA police, US Marshals, and local police.

Within hours of the shootout, in which two agents and an Indian activist died, hundreds of military-equipped FBI agents and US Marshals staged a dragnet through the reservation, terrifying men, women and children and ransacking homes. Peltier had already been identified by Cointelpro as the leader of AIM (American Indian Movement) and targeted for arrest. He fled to Canada.

With fabricated and flimsy evidence, Peltier was extradited, tried, and convicted. The government has admitted that the evidence is inconclusive, that witnesses were coerced, and that evidence of Peltier's innocence was suppressed, yet he still is serving time in prison.

Italian citizen Silvia Baraldini has been a radical activist since the 60s, when she protested against the war in Vietnam and racism, as well as demonstrated for women's rights. She also worked to expose Cointelpro and was an early supporter of the Black Panthers.

In 1994, Baraldini was charged with attempted robbery and aiding a prisoner escape. The robbery never took place; the prisoner was a jailed Black Panther leader. None of the crimes for which Baraldini was charged resulted in personal harm to anyone, yet she was convicted and sentenced to forty years, and received an

gram was notorious for planting informants in activist organizations; these informants would then disrupt their activities and even encourage them to break laws. Cointelpro had accumulated profiles on Martin Luther King, Black Panthers, and Native American groups. They had a profile on Peltier.

A young Native American, he had been accused of stealing used cowboy

additional three-year sentence for refusing to testify before a grand jury in an investigation of a Puerto Rican independence movement.

Since her conviction, Italy signed the Strasbourg Convention, officially petitioning for Baraldini's return. The US has transferred thousands of prisoners to their homelands, due to the actions of the convention. However, Italy's appeals for Baraldini's return have been repeatedly denied.

The government takes civil disobedience and political action very seriously. One would think that, in a "free" society, an act of civil disobedience would result in the courts taking a fresh look at the law, evaluating its just-ness. One would also assume that the actions of political activists might cause the legislature to re-evaluate the conditions that they protest.

However, this is often not true. In many cases, an act of civil disobedience plunges enforcement authorities into a mad scramble to toughen the law under protest and close any loopholes. Kevorkian could probably have gotten away with his mission of mercy had he gone about it quietly. However, once he went public, he became a threat to the power structure, and once "Sixty Minutes" took a sympathetic look at him and his work, prosecutors seemed to feel forced to "make an example" of him.

## **It is our duty as Americans to oppose actions that impinge on our own and others' civil rights, even if those actions are supported by popular opinion and the whim of the majority.**

Activism is most often met with resistance. If the resistance is unproductive, the activist is usually implicated in a crime which he or she did not commit. In some cases, such as in early infiltration efforts by the FBI of the Black Panthers, the intelligence-gatherers themselves may even cause violence. For example, one of Malcolm X's assassins admits that he was hired for that purpose by the FBI.

Political activism and civil disobedience are the bricks upon which our democracy is built.

Popular vote is often not enough to ensure the protection of our rights as individuals—in fact, popular opinion often acts at the expense of the individual. The fact that a majority of Americans have voted to create a law does not mean that the law is just or "right."

The men who drafted our Constitution recognized this and added a set of amendments—the Bill of Rights. They wisely determined that it was as important to protect the rights of the individual in spite of the will of the majority. In California, for instance, a vote repealed affirmative action. Just because a popular vote ended affirmative action does not mean that the action was "right."

In many states, the efforts to preserve the rights of gays and lesbians have been voted down. The efforts of moralists have created ordinances banning onstage nudity, threatened the abortion-rights of women, and gotten publishers and cartoonists thrown in jail.

It is our duty as Americans to oppose actions that impinge on our own and others' civil rights, even if those actions are supported by popular opinion and the whim of the majority. Most of America's political prisoners are there for recognizing and exercising that duty.

## Make an IMPACT

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<http://www.amnesty.org>

Prison Activist - progressive and radical info  
<http://www.prisonactivist.org>

Anarchist Black Cross Federation  
<http://burn.ucsd.edu/~abcf/>

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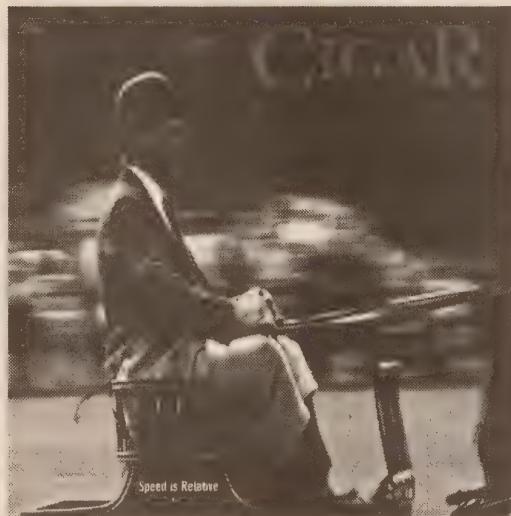
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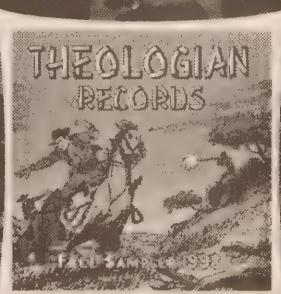
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# QUICKIES

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**30footFALL** • Ever Revolving, Never Evolving • Nitro Records • I'll tell you something... I like these guys. I mean, I don't know them, but I like their music and if they ever come to my town I'll buy them a beer. This is fun pop-punk that you simply can't help liking. They don't take themselves too seriously and as a result, they have fun and that shows through in the music.

**7 Seconds** • Good To Go • Side One Dummy Records • Do I really need to say anything? Most everyone knows and loves 7 Seconds. To be truthful, I haven't heard a lot of them but I know they've been around forever and anyone who knows punk knows 7 Seconds. I'll be getting more intimately acquainted with them ASAP. Super-charged punk - the way they were in the beginning!

**88 Fingers Louie/Kid Dynamite** • Split CD • Sub City Records • This ain't your mama's punk. This is fast as hell punk that nearly blew my ears out. Yeah, it's loud. What's that? Cow visit? Huh? Ohhhh...how is it?! Sorry, my ears are ringing. It's good stuff. Just straight-ahead punk, no frills.

**ADZ** • Odz'n'Sodz • Amsterdamned Records • This is a collection of odds and ends, singles, outtakes, demos and live stuff. Honestly, I had never heard of these fellows before, but this is good stuff. It runs the gamut from screaming distortion noise to cow-punk complete with harmonica. Very interesting and a cool collection of music all in all.

**All Chrome** • Flounders Flyers College and Canada • Ferret Records • For one reason or another I kept thinking of Hot Water Music while listening to All Chrome. Perhaps because they both have gruff sounding singers and frequent harmonizing. Perhaps because they both work within the hardcore vein. Perhaps because they both share lyrics dealing with introspection and coping with change. If these attributes appeal to you, seek out this CD.

**Animal Chin** • 20 Minutes From Right Now • Fueled By Ramen Records • Hold on to your pants cause this CD may cause you to dance out of 'em. Animal Chin is a three-piece made up of equal parts pop-punk and melodic power rock – mix it up and you've got yourself a totally unique, aggressive, emotional musical masterpiece founded on awesome vocals, creative song-writing, badass tempo changes and habit-forming hooks. This album will enter your veins and infect you, causing an increasingly addictive need to listen.

**Bill Rieflin** • Birth of a Giant • First World Music • Ministry fans need not apply. The aforementioned band's former drummer Bill Rieflin has released his solo debut, and it's nothing like what you might expect, which suits him just fine. Birth of a Giant is what you might call "messy pop." "This record is basically a balance between contrary ideas, opposing concepts," Rieflin says. The songs are mostly mid-tempo, but have a certain kind of urgency to them. Keyboards are all over this one, either as the driving force behind the song, or just for effect, accentuating the mood.

Most of which, by the way, are played by Mr. Rieflin himself. In fact, he plays bass, drums, "drill guitars," "disco organs," plus he sings on most tracks.

**Black Dave** • Next Stop the Ghetto • Roadrunner Records • This southern-fried rap release is coming out on a traditionally metal label. Now the label has decided to move into the rap realm and they enter on an upswing, droppin' Black Dave's new album. Through an agreement with Triad Records, also an indie label, Roadrunner is bringing the party-style hip-hop flavor of "Next Stop the Ghetto" to a larger audience. Dave's style is a mixture, but definitely has an Atlanta/Miami influence.

**Blood For Blood** • Livin' In Exile • Victory Records • You can say this for these guys: They sure have a lot of promotional material to sell you: hats, shirts, windbreakers, jerseys, stickers, etc., etc. It would be nice if they put as much effort into the music as they do in selling their name. The music ("hardcore from the streets, motherfucker!") is okay, but it really seems to lack the energy that I like in my hardcore. It just does not seem like they mean it. It's good, not great.

**Chicklet** • wanderlust • Satellite Records • Lovely is the sweet disco sounds of Chicklet. The female vocals are whispery and light and the music has a nice sixties cum nineties feel to it, wrought with melody and a mix of synths and guitars. This is a long album, so brace yourself for the beauty of "Glycerine" and "Afterstorm." Truly recommended for the international jet setters.

**Damnation** • Drunk & Stupid • R.A.F.R. Records • Let me begin by saying that this disc is disappointing. This is so because it only has 6 songs on it. This is probably the best disc I've heard this year. Super-evil punk in the fast and furious style of FEAR. This is fun and scary and excellent. My favorite is "Little Old Man Dog (who wants to mate with your leg)". I love it, though it will probably add another millennium in Hell for me to say that.

**Dayglo Abortions** • Death Race 2000 • GOD Records • If you're familiar with Dayglo, you don't even need to read this. If you're not, I'll make it real simple: punk rock that doesn't give two shits about political correctness. With songs like "Drink beer smoke pot, My mother was a man, Stupid Drunkin Fuckin Cunt, Euthanasia Day" and "Marijuanathon," you know what's going on. I will say this for them: their music is pretty damned good, surprisingly enough. Had I heard those song titles I wouldn't even have considered listening, but they pull it off.

**Del Rey** • diry • dirigible recordings • Mostly slow tempo instrumental stuff. Pretty cool music to have as a background while you do other things, because it doesn't get in the way. In this disc, you can detect a certain kind of sadness, although there are no vocals. Definitely worth checking out if you're into mellow music.

**Discount** • Love, Billy • Fueled by Ramen Records • This is a really cool concept: a tribute to the singing socialist, Billy Bragg. Discount performs five of Bragg's politically charged tunes in a straight-ahead punk style with excellent results. You can sense the band's admiration and respect for Bragg and his work. Discount's lead singer, Alison, brings out the passion and conviction of Bragg's lyrics, which are reprinted in the CD sleeve. This comes highly recommended for those who enjoy music with a message.

**Dream City Film Club** • In the Cold Light of Morning • Beggars Banquet • Betrayal! Confusion! Heartbreak! Feeling it lately? Start sipping some absinthe and check in on the Film Club. Some great, desolate lyrics here, with enough moody guitar work to make Carrot Top turn Goth (though they do pick it up a bit on tracks like "Nerveshot" and "Fuck It Up"). These guys owe a lot in atmospherics to bands like Radiohead, though unlike them, the songs don't really go anywhere surprising. This band picks a mood and sticks with it for better or worse. Most of the time, it's worth the commitment.

**Duraluxe** • Dolorosa • Meddle Records • Having something for everyone sometimes leaves nothing for anyone. Duraluxe are musicians with a capital "M." I respect their urge to cross from brit pop energy to indie pop slowness to country western tinged ballads and back again. The recording and musicianship are excellent. The songs fall neatly into their respective categories, and in their own right they attain a certain beauty. Unfortunately, the diversity creates abrupt shifts between tracks, and the beauty ultimately leaves me cold as I pick up on the emoting but feel left out of the emotion.

**Errortype:11** • The Crank EP • Crank! • This band is such a tease! At least we know they'll put out soon (full length expected in September). This five-song release is only a taste of what's to come from these rockers. Errortype:11 does to rock what the mainstream bands can't do – make it intricate, powerful and emotional at the same time. The vocals are absolutely astounding, only enhanced by the skillful musical accompaniment. Despite only being a sampling of what they have to offer, this new release is well worth checking out. [Note: Please don't miss out on seeing this band live – they are incredible!]

**E-Town Concrete** • F\$ck the World EP • Resurrection A.D. • Four songs worth of tight, angry metal ala Biohazard with some hip-hop grooves thrown in for good measure, though occasionally the beats come off a little forced. Gotta like the vocals though - this guy can wail. Worth checking out for the pissed-off urban set.

**Falling Sickness** • Dysentery • Sub City Records • Good God! These guys fuckin' go off! Taking political outrage and beating you over the head with it. Falling Sickness is rap, metal and punk all balled up and pissed off. The vocals on Dysentery border on unintelligible, but whatever

# QUICKIES

A little bit on a lot of records.

they're saying, you never doubt that they believe it.

**Fastbreak • Whenever You're Ready • Revelation Records** • They bill themselves as hardcore and punk, but I would say that they lean far closer to the latter than the former. This is fast punk that sounds pretty good. There are 13 songs on this disc and there is not a total clunker in the bunch. On the whole, I would say that this is a pretty decent disc for those who like their punk a bit faster and a bit harder than average.

**Franklin • self-titled • Tree Records** • I hate to sound like a broken record, but every other reviewer has had this same problem: how do you classify Franklin? Though they like to dwell mostly in the heavy bass/reggae/dub/hip-hop league, they stray from that on this CD. There are some alterna-pop numbers on here as well as the rhythm-heavy beats they hover around. Old Police and Jane's Addiction are among the bands they've been likened to. I just plain like them.

**Frenzal Rhomb • A Man's Not a Camel • Fat Wreck** • I'm very impressed with this pop-punk foursome. Their lyrics are well conceived, and their sound is very representative of the carefree spirit that I wish all in the punk rock world possessed. This excludes you stupid bastards that knock me over at shows in your tribal dance rituals. Highly recommended.

**FYP/Chaniwa • split CD • Suburban Home** • Before you know it, the disc is over – but you've been blown away by two of the coolest fast-paced punk rock bands. These two play punk rock, play it quick, play it rough and get it over with, no messing around. FYP is a California-based band pumping out five rippin' tracks. Chaniwa are direct from Tokyo, injecting you with wild, intense punk rock twisted wonderfully with female vocals and bound to make you like Japan even more.

**Gameface • Good • Dr. Strange Records** • This album was originally released by Network Sound years ago. It was great then – and still is (maybe better cause it's been remixed). This four-piece has a way of packaging mid-up tempo, melodic punk rock with emotional overtones that most other bands can't accomplish. The time changes, creativity, guitar work, lyrics, and vocals – all superb. Factor in Gameface's live show and they're one of the best rock bands out there.

**Garrison • The Bend Before the Break • Revelation Records** • This four-piece from Boston has a full and rich style which places great emphasis on melody and emotion. There are very complex beat patterns in their music, and the music dances in and out of sudden interludes with great prowess. Showing that they are obviously very skilled musicians, Garrison is a powerful force. Check them out.

**GONEMAD • Planet 9 • 896 Records** • This disc rocked my sorry ass all the way into next week. This is super heavy, super crunchy, super thrashing cool. Metal funk at its best; with a definite Method 51 or Stuck Mojo feel, these 5 dudes throw out some of the tightest, most listenable heavy

sounds around. They sound like Pantera and James Brown in a jam session. This has my vote as one of the best of 1999.

**Hero of a Hundred Fights • self-titled • 404 Records** • Hero of a Hundred Fights is angry, full of rage and discordance. It's certainly a worthwhile effort from a very talented band, and if wild music that leaves you with no clue as to where it's going to go next is your thing, I would urge you to partake.

**Himsa • self-titled EP • Revelation Records** • There's some good news and there's some bad news. The good news is that this is some of the most ass-kickin'est hardcore that you're going to hear this year. The bad news is that this disc has but three songs on it. It sort of whets your appetite and makes you want more. This is angry, super heavy hardcore that does not get lost in speed or aggression; there is music here! This is a great (though short) disc.

**Hot Rod Honey • Horny and Hungry • Man's Ruin Records** • This is 17 fantastic tracks of garage punk, a relentless assault on your senses that just makes you wanna flail wildly until you knock something over. This kind of music is a necessary part of living, methinks. This is a first release from the Belgian band. May the garage punk essence live forever!

**Husking Bee • Put on Fresh Paint • Doghouse Records** • Boys and Girls! You know have a new band to be excited about! Husking Bee appear to be from Japan, recorded this pop-punk album in Hollywood, and sing in a language that is indeed English. I bring up the language because though the words are difficult to decipher at times without the lyric sheet, the emotion conveyed in the sound of Masafumi Isobe's voice disarms you and engages you to bounce and dance along. Seriously- this is the raddest voice and delivery I've heard in a long time. This is such a great CD to get into- perfect for summer going on fall. You owe yourself a smile- give this a listen.

**Insidious • Moon In June • 404 Records** • REALLY Emo-rock here. This is the most emo emo-rock I've heard in a long time. Usually a song builds, hits a crescendo and fades away. These guys build, hit a crescendo, build some more, bigger crescendo...you get the idea. It's really good stuff. The production value isn't so great, which makes their talents even more impressive. Nice release.

**Iron Monkey/Church Of Misery • split CD • Man's Ruin Records** • Yikes! This is some seriously evil shit. It starts off a bit slow but gets swinging into full throttle with two bands who definitely belong on a disc together. Heavy riffs which have a definite old Black Sabbath feel to them are interspersed with pure evil ferocity that delivers a disc which is sure to please even the most deviant sociopath in your neighborhood.

**Jackpot/L.E.S. Stitches • Electric Live split CD • Onefoot Records** • This is sixteen songs

of pure, raw old school punk. Fast and furious is the name of these two bands who seem at their peaks when performing live. This disc captures the feel of a live show with two band who definitely give their all to perform. This is a great high energy disc for anyone whose life needs a kick in the pants.

**Jeff Dahl • All Trashed Up • Triple X Records** • This album rocks... but strangely, I can't quite figure out what about it rocks. It's just good. It's the kind of stuff that forces you to make a mean face, squint, and bob your head up and down. It's the kind of music I'd like to listen to while driving my Harley, if I had one. Just real "Bad to the Bone" rock.

**Jeff Greinke • Ride • First World Music** • With close to twenty recordings under his belt, Jeff Greinke delights us once more with *Ride*. Blending acoustic and electronic instruments, along with any other sounds he can get his hands on, he creates an aural background full of textures and layers. This album uses more conventional instruments than in some of his previous efforts, as he was aiming for a more rhythmic tone. In a time where everything seems to be aggressive and jagged, it's good to know that there is still someone out there that enjoys creating music for relaxing the mind. Turn off the lights and let Jeff do his work...

**Jeff Greinke/Anisa Romero • Hana • First World Music** • After collaborating a couple of times on different projects, Jeff Greinke and Anisa Romero decided it was time to record an album together. Romero brings her angelical voice to the forefront, not as a singer of words, but as another instrument in the mix. Only two songs have lyrics, but all have her voice drifting in and out, much like all of the other instruments. Greinke, on the other

# Quickies

A little bit on a lot of records.

hand, lends his musical talents, manipulating every sound so they blend into an ambient-type background.

**John Cougar Concentration Camp • Hot Shit • BYO Records** • I've heard of JCCC before but hadn't heard their music until now. If you already know them you won't be disappointed with this release. This is angry, fast-paced punk. Not much substance, what with songs like "Cold piss, Reece's feces" and "Half ass Jedi," but that's the whole punk idea, isn't it?

**Joshua • A Whole New Theory • Doghouse Records** • Solid melodic rock with a reggae influence. Joshua is far more polished than your average indie band with some slick production and good lyrics. Pick this up and check out the first track- sounds more like an early Police tune than most early Police tunes.

**Kevin Coyne • Sugar Candy Taxi • Ruf** • Kevin Coyne gives us a very insane sort of drunken blues, with surprisingly well-conceived lyrics. It's not difficult to listen to in the slightest... it's definitely got a light-hearted humor, an honesty, and a coolness about it which I just can't put my finger on. It all fits together so nicely.

**Kilmer • The Highlands And Lowlands • self-released** • I read the press material that came with this and thought, "Just what we need – a couple more kids crying out in angst." But, much to my joy, this disc is really good. These guys play emo-rock with great skill and terrific power. Song number three, "Do I say goodbye?" won me over instantly. They deserve a listen.

**Leatherface • Cherry Knowle • BYO Records** • This is pretty straight-forward punk. It sounds pretty good, though there is something that I just don't care for about the singer's voice. They have a good crunchy guitar sound and the music drives ahead at an admirable rate. Some of the songs are better than others but none are particularly outstanding. It's an okay disc.

**Limp • Fine Girl • Fueled By Ramen** • Five little ditties to keep your Limp cravings in check. What can I tell you, this is pop-punk filled with harmonies. This was actually recorded in 1998, before "Guitarded," their second full-length. *Fine Girl* features ex-Screw 32 guitar player, Doug Sangalang, who replaced Billy, the original guitarist.

**Lost Goat • Equator • Man's Ruin Records** • Following the current resurgence of metal into the mainstream is Lost Goat. Though not as radio accessible as the onslaught of Korn, Limp Bizkit and the other Rage-like bands, Lost Goat get right to basics. If you're in the mood for Black Sabbath and Saxon for the 90's, this is for you.

**Lungfish • The Unanimous Hour • Dischord Records** • Lungfish are getting up there in years and it shows. Their latest effort, *The Unanimous Hour*, is solid stuff but after a while it begins to drone on a little. Take this album in small doses and pay close attention to the lyrics. Wow! These guys are tripping balls.

**Magnet • Shark Bait • PC Music** • Catchy pop tunes from a bunch of different artists. There's tremendous wit in the sophomore release of this band featuring front man Mark Goodman and 17 other musicians from other bands in the vast alternative world. Each contributes a little to each and every composition, making every track unique from every other. There's some really great stuff here.

**Mekons • Where Were You? Hen's Teeth and Other Lost Fragments of Unpopular Culture Vol. 2 • Quarterstick Records** • What the hell? A collection of B-sides and rare tracks by the already schizophrenic Mekons? It's not as weird as you might think, but it is very good stuff. There's some psychedelia (Hashish in Marseilles), mellow reggae (1967 Revisited), and country (a surprisingly faithful cover of Folsom Prison Blues). Oh, yeah, and lots of great English punk, too. You will dig something on this one, and the band has fun with it all. They've been around for 21 years, and hopefully will be around for many more. Definitely worth picking up if you haven't heard them before.

**Miles Hunt • Hairy On The Inside • GIG Records** • This is one talented SOB. Miles spent a decade as singer, guitarist and songwriter for the UK band The Wonder Stuff. He's out on his own now on this acoustic CD. The songs here are very well crafted and the lyrics are thought-provoking at their worst, chilling in their finest. He reminds you at time of Robert Smith with just as much talent and intensity. Excellent disc.

**Muckafurgason • The Gay EP • Deep Elm Records** • The premise of a gay-focused EP is brilliant, however, the execution lacks. Muckafurgason's previous full-length, "Tossing a Friend," crossed all musical boundaries. Rap, Country, Rock, Pop were all represented in that fine album. This EP doesn't vary beyond straight forward rock stylings lyrically and sonically. Sure, the "west" version of "You Ain't a Man" is a house remake, but where did the variety go? Unfortunately, after numerous listens, the most promising aspect of this EP is the title.

**Mushroom • analog hi-fi surprise • innerSPACE records** • As their name suggests, Mushroom play some pretty trippy music. Taking a cue from '70s era jazz and fusion, they plow their way through seven tracks filled with mellotrons and moogs, Rhodes pianos and other keyboards, backed up by guitars, drums, and percussion. Four out of the seven songs are longer than 9 minutes, taking on an improvised feel. You can feel influences from the Doors, Return to Forever, Miles Davis, Can, and Herbie Hancock, just to name a few.

**Naked Raygun • re-issue of material • Quarterstick** • Classic, essential, and brilliant are all great words to describe "the" punk band of the Midwest. Starting in 1980, Naked Raygun introduced Chicago to their style of melodic rock that was totally punk featuring awesome hooks, sing-along choruses and angst-filled aggression.

Now, their long out-of-print classics are available again. "Basement Scream" (1983), "Throb Throb" (1984), "All Rise" (1985), "Jettison" (1988), "Understand?" (1988) and "Raygun...Naked Raygun" (1990) are some of the greatest punk releases ever and are a must have for any fan of punk music.

**New American Mob • All Mob Cons • RAFR Records** • This is no-frills punk. It's more like riff-rock really — like punk was played 20 years ago. It's not too bad. They've got some good harmony and Kate, the drummer, more than holds her own with her male cohorts.

**November Doom • Of Sculptured Ivy and Stone Flowers • Martyr Music Group** • November Doom will turn your mood into a sour one after you listen to "Of Sculptured Ivy and Stone Flowers." Vocalist Paul Kuhr's surprisingly understandable lyrics will haunt you in your dreams. Contrasting Kuhr's style is Cathy Jo Hejna (who recently left the band, along with drummer Emmett Hall), with her classically trained Opera voice singing beautifully in the background. Even though this is doom metal, there are some beautiful parts to this album.

**Octant • shock-no-par • Up Records** • What can I tell you, the drums play themselves. I don't mean a drum-machine. I mean a robot called Octant operates the drums. Different mallets are located above different parts of the drum kit and are operated by a computer. I have to admit, I would have never guessed. The whole thing is very trippy, with various computer-generated sounds all over the place. There are also two short films on this CD, to be viewed on your computer. Both are very low budget stop motion animation films set to one a song from the album.

**Orange 9mm • Pretend I'm Human • Ng Records** • Try and duck this musical and lyrical onslaught from three-piece wrecking crew known as Orange 9mm. The ten tracks on this album are a totally new sound for the band – a mix of Prodigy, Pantera and Rage Against the Machine, creatively done and tweaked into a unique style. Chaka has skillz when it comes to his vocal flow and the music has catchy, gritty hooks and riffs that get under your skin and pump your blood, coupled with electronic beats and sounds that add an unusual aspect to the hard-edged compositions.

**Organic Brain Syndrome • self-titled • Fatalist Records** • Whacked-out, a thousand times over. Holy cow, I can't believe this stuff. This is a bold amateur experiment from a trio of truly warped individuals. These folks have real potential. Much of this album sounds fuzzy, probably intentionally... But it's whacked as hell, and that's always a good thing.

**Panty Christ • self-titled • Seeland Records** • This is noise with a beat. At least there is often a beat somewhere in it. It's not particularly stellar noise, either. The minor novelty of this group is that the speaker is a transvestite (Boy George?). The monologues are mildly amusing, but Mr. Bond is too gay. He sounds like an annoying homosexual stereotype. Save your pennies, kids.

# QUICKIES

A little bit on a lot of records.

**Pistis** • *bread and circuses* • nowOrange records • Pistis call their style of music "Rock, Indie Rock, Math Rock". After listening, I still don't know what Math Rock is, but I'm calling it Lassitude Rock. It brought to mind the early '90's work of Stone Roses; lots of laid back, yet intense guitar with almost monotone vocals. The lyrics are smart, and, under the right influences, probably thought provoking. Lay back and enjoy the lassitude.

**Pulpit Red** • *Lurk* • Syncretist Records • I was intrigued by song titles like "Jackbooth Janitor" and "Freak Show". It is with a heavy heart though that I must admit that the actual songs do not live up to the potential set by their nomenclature. This is okay punk, but certainly not great. Some songs are kind of catchy, but on the whole, I must say that this disc left me a bit cold.

**Retromotive** • *Corpses and Tightrope Walkers* • Maelstrom • This disc is okay, and that's about the best I can say for it. The band does eschew normal song structure, but this relative novelty is not enough to save strictly mediocre music. It is gloomy and slow, which is not necessarily a bad thing, but there does not seem to be enough actual feeling behind it to make it seem believable.

**Rodriguez** • *Swing Like A Metronome* • Devil In The Woods Records • This has a Son Volt flair to it mostly, but they delve into some emo and indie pop as well. The singer's voice gets a little burdensome at times as he tries too hard to make you feel sorry for him, like Neil Young after a REALLY bad day. Not bad in small doses.

**Scared of Chaka** • *Tired of You* • Sub City • Straddling the line between garage, power pop, and hardcore, Scared of Chaka unleash a sonically and lyrically sounding CD. Though it starts heavy with the first few tracks, the sound lightens up though their songwriting remains strong throughout. It's nice to hear diversity on a record—it allows listeners a relief from monotony. Also note that this CD is more than music—proceeds of all sales go to New Day Youth and Family Services, a non-profit agency in New Mexico. Cheers to Scared of Chaka for putting out a good record on a community enhancing label.

**Sheilbound** • *Counting On Abacus* • Playing Field Records • I think it's time to create a new genre. Let me introduce you to...Emo-punk. Oh, let me guess, it's been around forever, right? Uh-huh. Well, this is the first time I've heard it and if the rest of it is like Sheilbound then thank you sir, may I have another? This is really cool and has been in my rotation for the past few weeks now. If you don't like in your face, balls to the wall punk but still want that rock-out vibe with a pinch of indie/emo rock, this is it.

**Six Going on Seven** • *Heartbreak's Got Backbeat* • Some Records • Six Going on Seven's second full-length, *Heartbreak's Got Backbeat*, finds our heroes serving up some more of that emo the kids can't get enough of nowadays. The songs are well crafted, but lack the intensity to truly draw the listener in. The production is al-

most too good, as some of the songs sound excessively clean and polished. Maybe I've become overly accustomed to lo-fi rock, but these tunes could use a more dirt under the fingers.

**Skull Kontrol** • *Deviate Beyond All Means Of Capture* • Touch and Go Records • These guys seem to have good intentions. They're against selling out and all that stuff bands strive to be but, unfortunately, their music isn't as good as their intentions. It's some kind of experimental punk that but it doesn't fly.

**Sleepyhead** • *The Brighter Shore* • Sealed Fate Records • Tired of all that angry-I-wanna-kill-myself-and-everyone-else music? Sleepyhead is for you. As their name evokes, this is light, airy indie pop. They have some psychedelic sounds in here, along with some crunchy guitars and groovy hooks. Fast forward right to track seven, turn on the lava lamp and, like, mellow out, man.

**Slipknot** • *self titled* • Roadrunner Records • Three percussionists, two guitar players, one bass player, one DJ, and one "sample master" make up this outfit. Nine freaks from Des Moines—draped in industrial coveralls, and surrealistic self-made masks, create a sound that combines violently regurgitated "L.A. neo-metal," death metal, hip-hop, and downtuned screeching horror to bring fear to anyone who dares to listen to their madness. Their name is 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and their music sounds like Factory and Pantera in the middle of a bar brawl.

**Snapcase/Boy Sets Fire** • *Split EP* • Equal Vision Records • There are only 4 songs on this disc and that is unfortunate. This is a good EP, though I will admit that I am partial to Snapcase. Both bands play good hardcore but Snapcase (who cover a Police tune for one of their two tracks) seems a bit more... well... hardcore. It is, however, a good disc.

**Studbull's Disco Biscuit** • *Return of the Super Zeros* • Sin Klub Entertainment • Ambitious, funky Ohio hardcore with guitar riffs hot enough to boil your bong water. They rock, they toke and they watch zombie movies—what more could you ask for? Some better lyrics, maybe. All in all, though, solid stuff.

**Sunday's Best** • *Where You Are Now* • Crank! Records • *Where You Are Now* is the debut EP for this Los Angeles quartet. Despite guitarist Pedro

Benito's assertions that they are "a cross between the Police and Foghat", Sunday's Best isn't about to pop up on any classic rock station's playlist. The band plays a Seam-like indie rock, with the occasional foray into emo territory. It ain't no "Slowride" (thankfully enough), just a promising debut.

**Super Furry Animals** • *Guerrilla* • Flydaddy Records • For a Welsh band that started out as a techno outfit, Super Furry Animals sure have a good handle on guitar driven Britpop. Their electronic background is evident, though, with every "ping" and "beep" that surfaces along the way. SFA dubs their style as "Digital Beach Music," blending 60s pop, Glam, Krautrock, 90s rave culture, and even a little bit of Latin percussion. "Northern Lights" features said percussion, and some calypso drums to add a Caribbean feel. Even the High Llamas stop by to lend their talents to the melodic "Turning Tide."

**The Ataris** • *Blue Skies, Broken Hearts...Next 12 Exits* • Kung Fu Records • Punk rock doesn't get much catchier than this. Back with another full-length record is The Ataris. There isn't a bad track on this record, which moves at an uptempo pace combining superb melodies with great tempo changes and killer vocals. This is one hell of a fun record.

**The Chinkees** • *Peace Through Music* • Asian Man Records • Ska without the horns. I like this disc. It is well performed and has a positive message to boot. The songs are catchy, entertaining and fun. They sound like old-type ska, a bit more relaxed and slower than the ska we typically hear today, punked-out too far. These Chinkees are well worth listening to.

**The Donnas** • *Get Skintight* • Lookout! Records • I love The Donnas! I love their music, too. I'm sure you've heard of this all-girl (all young girl) punk band by now. They're taking the country by storm with their blend of no-frills numbers. These girls play punk with reckless abandon, the way it



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# QUICKIES

A little bit on a lot of records.

was meant to be. And they don't pretend to be some emotional, save the earth pseudo band that tries to make us think when we can't even understand the words. Every single song is a keeper and their cover of Motley Crue's "Too Fast For Love" is genius. Four stars, two thumbs up, five exploding bomb symbols...whatever you want to call it. This is just too fun to pass up.

**The Fairlanes** • *Bite Your Tongue* • Suburban Home Records • I've said it before and doggonit, I'll say it again; these guys rock. This is fun pop-punk in the way of the Queers, which immediately makes it good. It is unfortunate that there are only 8 songs on the disc (including a delightful Madonna cover) but we can hope that their next disc will have ten thousand songs on it, all as good as these. This is a disc that you should buy two copies of, because you will wear one out. Trust me.

**The Impossibles** • *Anthology* • Fueled by Ramen • YES! This album unfortunately marks the end of The Impossibles, an Austin, Texas four-piece with a sharp smartness to their punk rock attitude. Sad to see this jewel of a band go into the annals of history, but it's very nice to have this anthology with which to remember them... a band I hardly knew <sob>

**The Jackie Papers** • *I'm In Love* • Panic Button • Three chicks and one guy seem like it may add up to musical nirvana, but this disc does not live up to its potential. The songs are mediocre punk with a rock-n-roll slant to them. They do try some different things, which make it interesting, but on the whole this is not a super disc.

**The Mullens** • *Go Where The Action Is* • Get Hip Recordings • The Mullens aren't the slickest band out there, but they are a hell of a good time. Rough sounding with simple lyrics and rhythms. The Mullens won't break new ground any time soon, but that's okay. Forget the politics and such. Just enjoy!

**The Pietasters** • *Awesome Mix Tape #6* • Epitaph Records • It's not a mix tape, it's the newest album from one of the smoothest ska bands around. Featured on this new release are 13 toe-tappin', head-bobbin' tracks. The music is very traditional when it comes to ska and that's sure to

help you "get your groove on." The vocals are awesome, the horn section is tight and the music is catchy and ska-rrific (HA!). So go find a fancy outfit and some shiny shoes, pop the Pietasters in the stereo and rock till the early morn.

**The Sons of Hercules** • *Get Lost* • Get Hip • This bad ass band from San Antonio give you garage punk at its best, my garage-punk-loving minions. Yelling and extended guitar solos... I just wanna play this and drive around with the windows down giving people nasty-ass looks. That's what it's all about, baby. Gotta have the attitude.

**The Stereo** • *Three Hundred* • Fueled By Ramen • Ex-Impossibles and Animal Chin members, Rory and Jaime, join to form the new rock for the millenium – adding piano and keyboard to their already skilled guitar, bass and drum work. Tight melodies that are sweet as sugar and hooks that could cause a car wreck are the prescription for their success. J. Robbins produced this along with the guys and his brilliant touch shines through. Melding the sounds of such greats as Journey, Weezer and Elton John (worlds apart, but pop all the same), this release will wrap around you and swallow you whole.

**The Wicked Farleys** • *Sustained Interest EP* • Big Top Records • The Wicked Farleys' new EP serves as a good introduction to the Massachusetts band, featuring both new and previously released material. The music has touches of math rock mixed with a more melodic pop sound. And, as an added bonus, the Farleys cover the Mysterians classic, "96 Tears", complete with the cheesy sounding keyboards that made the original so cool.

**Toilet Boys** • *Living Like A Millionaire* • RAFR Records • I heard about this band on the Howard Stern Show. If you've listened to Howard you know the routine: some stupid chick comes on the show and agrees to take her top off if Howard plays a song from her favorite band's CD. Well, I heard the show the day some stupid chick came on and flashed Stern to play a cut from the Toilet Boys. I don't remember what track he played because it was so bad. So, when I saw they had a whole CD, I felt it my service to you, the public, to tip you off before you bit on a catchy name and some snazzy-looking outfits. This is a six-song EP that starts out punk, ends up metal and there's nothing good in between. That chick should have kept her shirt on.

**Tom Waits** • *Mule Variations* • Epitaph Records • The old master of drunken melancholy returns! This guy has been there and done that, and you can hear every step of the journey in his voice.

Waits gives us some of his best piano bar blues in years and even threatens to get funky with side trips like "Big In Japan" (featuring Les Claypool and Larry LaLonde of Primus). Excellent music for the last leg of that road trip.

**Trial** • *Are These Our Lives?* • Equal Vision Records • Right then, who's pissed off? Can't find your Cro-Mags disc? No sweat, just flip this onto your player and get f-ing hostile! The first song is, oddly enough, a beautiful accompaniment on strings, kind of a calm before the storm thing, and then these guys get hardcore like nobody's business. OK, then they throw more strings in there on track seven, but who's counting? It's hardcore, OK? Trust me.

**Various Artists** • *ESPN Presents...Jock Rock 2000* • Tommy Boy Music • This is the perfect CD to remind you of all the songs that have been played to death by commercial radio stations all over the country. How they are supposed to be related to sports is beyond me. Tell you what...I'll tell you the band name, and you guess the song. Prodigy. Harvey Danger. Third Eye Blind. Barenaked Ladies. Fatboy Slim. Local H. The Chemical Brothers. Cherry Poppin' Daddies. CIV. These are just a few. If you did not guess the song names, maybe you *should* buy this album. If you did guess them, skip it because you're probably sick of them anyway.

**Various Artists** • *Return of the Read Menace* • Honest Don's/AK Press • If AK Press is involved in a musical release, you know it's more than just your middle of the road music. This compilation features 25 songs from 25 bands – all forward thinking, enlightened individuals fighting to make our world better. Stand out tracks include songs by J Church, ...But Alive, Ron Hawkins, The Levellers, Atom and His Package, Discount, Moral Crux, and Cooper. Please ignore the tracks by Wat Tyler, Chumbawamba and DOA. For the most part and the \$8.98 price – this is a killer release.

**Various Artists** • *Sealed Fate Mystique* • Sealed Fate • "A stunning collection of end-of-the century music," this compilation of the Sealed Fate label's finest is a benefit for the AIDS Action Committee, and feature 15 great pop bands from all over the damned place including Purple Ivy Shadows, Future Bible Heroes, Beachwood Sparks, Honeybunch and more.

**Various Artists** • *Take Action* • Sub City • This punk rock sampler sends its proceeds to the Foundation Fighting Blindness. Which doesn't seem fair, blind people can't see the punch coming. If you're a punk fan you can't go wrong with Sub City. The tracks vary from very good punk (Scared of Chaka) to very drunken punk (Falling Sickness) but in all a damn good compilation. Besides it's for a good cause. Go buy it.

**Various Artists** • *The East Coast of Oil* • Radical Records • This is the kind of CD that would make Bob Dole want to put down his Viagra in favor of entering a mosh pit in oxblood boots with a cheap canned beer in his hand. It started off a

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# QUICKIES

A little bit on a lot of records.

little slow with The Wretched Ones' "Welcome to the East Coast". Apparently, that's where they drink the most. But as the tracks changed I was wishing I were out there in the fray, instead of sitting at home listening by the glow of the computer. With groups like The Outsiders, The Cuffs, Man's Ruin and Heidnick Stew leading the fury, this is a must buy.

**Various Artists • Punks Not Dead: A Tribute to The Exploited • Radical Records** • This is a must-own record for any self respecting punk or The Exploited fan. The music is aggressive street rock by a list of excellent Oi! and punk including Blanks 77, Violent Society, The Bruiers, and Squiggy doing a nice rendition of one of my favorite Exploited songs, "Fuck the Mods." Joy comes in Niblick Henbane's inclusion of my favorite song "Sex and Violence" in their rendition of "Cop Cars." Though I'm wary of tributes, this one is dead-on perfect. The music is tops, and the liner notes alone are worth the cost of the CD.

**Various Artists • Unsealed: A Tribute to the Go-Go's • 4 Alarm Records** • This tribute to the Go-Go's is extremely fun, a fitting tribute to the poppy 80's girl group. Rather than emulate the original versions note for note, the artists here use them as a starting point to leap into their own realm. Perhaps the most successful is electronic deconstruction of Season to Risk's cover of "This Town," and the lo-fi sampling fun of The Frog's take on "Vacation" with a funny "whatever" tossed in intermittently. Other bands that contribute are the Chainsaw Kittens, and a sitar medley courtesy of Allon Beausoliel, plus others. Pretty much all the Go-Go's classics are here, and the interpretations are more inventive when they don't go the heavy route.

**Various Artists • Where Is My Mind?: A Tribute to the Pixies • Glue Factory Records** • Upon first listen, I hated this CD. Most of the renditions sounded just like the Pixies, so much that I longed to hear the reckless abandon of the inspiring originals rather than covers. However, with time apart from this CD, I'm okay with it, and actually have developed a love-hate relationship with the disc. On the love side, good bands covers some great songs. On the hate side, the covers are just like the originals, so what's the point, particularly when Pixies's original label 4AD has re-released their best records (Come On Pilgrim; Surfer Rosa; Doolittle). The bands involved in this that turn out good covers are: Weezer, The Get-Up Kids, Superdrag, with Nada Surf doing a lovely rendition of "Where is My Mind?", the first Pixies song I ever heard. All heard, I recommend this disc to old fans and those who missed the Pixies their first go around.

**Victory at Sea • The Dark is Just the Night • Slowdime** • Darkness settles on you as you flow depressingly through the melancholy work of this Boston three-piece. Excellent vocals make this album somewhat of a haunting lullaby gone into spirits decayed. Very well done.

## Seven inches

**Computer Cougar • self-titled • Gern Blansten**

This record is thick, literally - the vinyl is heavy duty. The music is active, jumping all over the place with awesome guitar parts and tempo changes to keep you wide awake. One track has vocals that are half-spoken and sung, that sounds good, while the other song is screamed, which I don't like. Frankly, these songs would be great without vocals, anyway.

**Fishsticks/Hostile Takeover • split • Aloha Records**

The Fishsticks are all about punk rock and they like it fast. One their side you get a large serving of five, fast and furious tunes in the old school punk rock vein (eg: Angry Samoans, DRI) - including a near-perfect cover of the Misfits "Mommy, Can I Go Out and Kill Tonight." Hostile Takeover are a completely different monster, delivering one track of '80s synth stuff along the lines of New Order with a bit more rockin' sound.

**Forstella Ford • Arcebus vs. Archer • 404 Records**

Hold on tight cause you're about to be both musically and verbally assaulted. Four guys get outta control on the two tracks featured here. It's hardcore with an indie-music creativeness. I could do without the screamed vocals, though.

**Mad Parade • self-titled • Dr. Strange Records**

Pretty blue vinyl blessed with four-tracks worth of aggressive, melodic punk filled with insightful, intelligent lyrics. This is limited to only 950 copies so you better get one quick.

**Stewart Brodian • Hot for Preacher • self-released**

This is a one-man, singer-songwriter deal with the kind of tunes you'd expect to hear at open-mic night. They are catchy, poppy acoustic gems with clever lyrics and decent vocals.

**The Starlite Desperation • Hot for Preacher • Gold Standard Laboratories**

The two tracks on here are garage rock and roll with a touch of blues. It makes you want to drive a hot rod really, really fast with one arm on the steering wheel and the other wrapped round your significant other in a proud way, snarling all the time.

## Videos

**Release • a documentary by Brian Sersen • Victory Records**

Some will like this, but I don't care for it. Maybe if this was old footage or candid shots of the bands on tour I'd be more interested, but it's mostly live footage with voice-overs and some commentary by musicians and fans. It features great bands like Weston, Lifetime, Ignite, Bouncing Souls, Good Riddance, Sick of It All, Battery and tons more. So, if you like to see concerts on video, you'll really dig it cause the sound and quality is pretty good and they do sit down and chat with some of the included bands. But if you're looking to get behind the scenes, this won't take you far.

## Label Addresses

(write these guys, tell 'em IMPACT sent ya)

404 Records, PO Box 827, Normal, IL 61761

4 Alarm Records, 660 W. Lake St., Chicago, IL 60661

896 Records, Box 5334, NY, NY 10185

Aloha Records, PO Box 1070, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

Beggars Banquet, 580 Broadway, Ste. 115, Cambridge, MA 02139

BYO Records, PO Box 67A64, LA, CA 90067

Crank!, 1223 Wilshire Blvd #223, Santa Monica, CA 90403

Deep Elm, PO Box 1965, New York, NY 10156

Devil In The Woods, PO Box 11348, Berkeley, CA 94713

Dirigible Recordings, 1426 W. Walton 3F, Chicago, IL 60622

Dischord, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington DC 20007

Doghouse Records, PO Box 8946, Toledo, OH 43623

Dr. Strange, PO Box 7000-117, Aliso Loma, CA 91701

Epitaph Records, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026

Equal Vision, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232

Fatalist Records, 806 Maplewood Dr., W. Palm Bch., FL 33415

Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Fran, CA 94119-3690

Ferret Records, PO Box 4118, Highland Park, NJ 08904

First World Music, PO Box 30932, Seattle, WA 98103

Flydaddy Records PO Box 545 Newport RI 02840

Fueled By Ramen, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604

Gem Blandsten, PO Box 356, River Edge, NJ 07661

Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317

Gig Records, 520 Butler Avenue, Point Pleasant, NJ 07842

Glue Factory, PO Box 4104, Redondo Beach, CA 90277

God Recs, PO Box 44132, Victoria, BC, Canada V9A 7H7

Gold Standard Labs, PO Box 11794, Berkeley, CA 94712-2794

Honest Don's, PO Box 19207, San Francisco, CA 94119-2027

innerSPACE, PO Box 411241, San Francisco, CA 94141-1241

Kilmer, 14925 NE 163 Street, Woodinville, WA 98072

Kung Fu Records, PO Box 3061, Seal Beach, CA 90740

Lookout! Records, PO Box 11374, Berkeley, CA 11374

Maelstrom Music, Box 808, Seal Beach, CA 90740

Man's Ruin, 610 22nd Street, #302, San Francisco, CA 94107

Martyr Music Group, 532 La Guardia Pl. #544, NY, NY 10012

Meddle Records, 1929 Cropsey Ave, Brooklyn NY 11214

Ng Records, 81 Van Dam Street, 2nd Fl., NY, NY 10013

Nitro, 7071 Warner Ave. F-736, Huntington Beach, CA 92647

nowOrange Recs, 68 Cheney Pl., Ste. 2, Orlando, FL 32801

Panic Button, PO Box 148010, Chicago, IL 60614-8010

PC Music, 711 Eighth Ave., San Diego, CA 92101

Playing Field Records, PO Box 851, Urbana, IL 61803

Quarterstick Records, PO Box 25342, Chicago, IL, 60625

Radical Records, 77 Bleeker St. #C2-21, NYC, NY 10012

RAFR, 11054 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 205, Studio City, CA 91604

Resurrection AD, PO Box 763, Red Bank, NJ 07701

Revelation, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232

Roadrunner Records 536 Broadway, New York, NY 10012

Ruf Records, Kirchstr.24, D-37318, Linderwerra, Germany

Satellite, 920 E. Colorado Blvd. #151, Pasadena, CA 91106

Sealed Fate, PO Box 9183 #120, Cambridge, MA 02139

Seeland, 1290 Monument Blvd. MF1, Concord, CA 94520

Side One, 6201 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 211, Hollywood, CA 90028

Sin Klub Entertainment, PO Box 2507, Toledo, OH 43606

Slowdime, PO Box 414, Arlington, VA 22210

Some Recs, 122 West 29th St, 4th Floor, NY, NY 10001

Stewart Brodian, PO Box 1253, Easton, PA 18044

Sub City, PO Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409-7495

Suburban Home, 1750 30th St. #365, Boulder, CO 80301

Syncretist Records, 1112 NW 49, OKC, OK 73118

Tommy Boy Music, 902 Broadway, New York, NY 10010

Touch and Go Records, PO Box 25520, Chicago, IL 60625

Treasure Records, PO Box 75852, Chicago, IL 60657

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# Urine and the quest for employment

by Adam Finley  
art by Eachean Edmundson

If one thing, above all others, qualifies a person for a job, it has to be his/her ability to urinate into a plastic cup.

When I go to job interviews, I like to urinate in a plastic cup before showing my resume, shaking hands, or discussing salary. This proves to my prospective employer that not only do I have integrity and a strong work ethic, but that I have the ability to urinate into a mass produced, recyclable receptacle.

I've recently completed a nationwide job search, and the omnipresent shadow of urine looms over the job market like some Roman god surveying the life forms below. It leaves one filled with admiration, and even a little fear, the kind of fear that arises out of the unadulterated respect only urine can manifest. The following is a transcript of an interview I had with the editor of the Miami Herald:

**Editor:** So, Adam, I see you're interested in a position as a reporter with our newspaper.

**Me:** That is correct.

**Editor:** Well, as you can see from the shelf behind me, you'll have some pretty big shoes to fill.

**Me:** Are you referring to the bookshelf with the fifty-plus cups of urine arranged on it?

**Editor:** Of course. [He gestures with a laser pointer]. See this one? That's Rick Myer, copy editor from 1987 to 1996. Notice how the color is almost a straight yellow, but when held up to the light, the shade changes to a light green?

**Me:** Uncanny.

**Editor:** You know, he always came to work late, he smelled like

coleslaw, he only knew the alphabet up to the letter J, and when you gave him a page to copy edit, he'd stare at it for a couple of minutes and then lock himself in the broom closet. But damn, his urine!

**Me:** I can urinate with the best of them!

**Editor:** Slow down, son. You'll have to go to the clinic first.

**Me:** But I brought my own cup and everything.

**Editor:** That's fine, but we like our candidates to go to the clinic. Once they've urinated, they must carry their urine through several corridors, eventually ending up outside in the parking lot.

They'll turn to open the door, but alas, it will have locked from the inside. The candidate must then track down Hank the deaf groundskeeper and get him to open the door. Once back inside, the candidate will not be able to escape the clinic until it has defeated the Menotaur, the malevolent beast that guards the maze.

**Me:** Sounds reasonable.

Many people find urinating into a cup to be an invasion of privacy, and an inane method of proving one's ability to work. The

truth is, one has a constitutional right to refuse to urinate into a cup, or any container that holds liquid for that matter, even crock pots, although one can certainly see the benefits of urinating into a crock pot. However, I can't think of anything that says "ideal job candidate" more than a Solo cup filled to the brim with urine, that fifteen second biological function that can speak more volumes than any masters degree.



**I've recently completed a nationwide job search, and the omnipresent shadow of urine looms over the job market like some Roman god surveying the life forms below.**

# America's Ritual Genocide of Iraq

By K. Shreeram

While the U.S. media makes the death of John F. Kennedy Jr. out to be a monumental national, and even an international, tragedy and spin doctors ask us to drop everything else and grieve for the "ill-fated" Kennedy family, it is business as usual with Washington's war against Iraq.

Three days after Kennedy flew his six-seater into the Atlantic, U.S. warplanes killed 17 civilians in southern Iraq. Among the collateral damage this time — a couple, parents of seven children. Liyla and Ayad Na'mah had just got in their car to visit relatives when Uncle Sam blew them away.

The U.S. media, obsessed with the lives and deaths of the kings and queens of Camelot, paid even less attention than usual to the slaying of 17 Iraqis.

While daily bombings by the United States take their toll, most of Washington's victims in Iraq do not die so dramatically, or as quickly.

August 6 will mark the 9<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S.-forced sanctions against Iraq. The sanctions have become a slow, excruciatingly painful ritual human sacrifice in which Iraqi corpses continue to pile up, victims of Washington's cynical and duplicitous policies in the Middle East.

More than 250 people, mostly children under 5, die each day because of sanctions, according to a UNICEF report released in April. More than one-and-a-half million faceless, nameless, and relatively unreported Iraqis have been killed by the sanctions imposed in 1990. That's about 5 percent of Iraq's pre-sanctions population. In percentage terms, that is equivalent to about 13 million dead Americans. The World Food Programme says more than 1.2 million Iraqi children died due to the embargo between August 1990 and August 1997 — a generation sanctioned into nonexistence.



Malnutritioned children are a common thing in Iraq, often so severe that it leads to death.

The per capita income of Iraq has gone from \$2,900 a year to \$60 a year. A can of powdered milk costs as much as one month of a doctor's salary. Surgery and amputations are conducted routinely without anesthesia. Sanitation facilities are abysmal. Fifty percent of the rural population does not have access to potable water, compared to a 92 percent access rate in 1990. The majority of Iraqis has been on a semi-starvation diet for the last few years, according to the World Health Organization. Infant mortality has increased six-fold since 1990. The once exemplary and free public health system has been decimated. Inflation has increased astronomically. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization, the price of wheat flour in August 1995 was 11,677 times higher (1.16 million percent) than in July 1990. Crime has skyrocketed.

"This is a town where people used to leave the key in the front door, leave their cars unlocked, where crime was almost unknown. We have, through the sanctions, really disrupted this quality of life, the standard of behavior that was common in Iraq before," said Denis Halliday, who last September resigned his post as co-ordinator of the UN oil-for-food deal in Iraq.

Writing in the New Internationalist earlier this year, Felicity Arbuthnot describes a little incident she witnessed in Iraq: "In a small grocery store in a poor area of Baghdad early one morning I watched a child of perhaps five, in the mode of small children everywhere, proudly doing a terribly important errand: he bought one egg. A tray of 30 eggs exceeds a university professor's monthly salary....As he left, the child dropped the egg. He fell to the floor, frantically trying to pick the shell, yolk and white, with his small hands, tears streaming down his face. As I reached in my pocket, the shopkeeper gently tapped him on the shoulder and gave him another."

Among the items banned by the Security Council from export to Iraq are adhesive tape, soccer balls, bags, bicycles, books, calculators, candle sticks, toys, children's clothing, shoelaces, lamps, detergents, dolls, eyeglasses, hairpins, paper clips and medical supplies.

The list is endless.

The loss of life caused by the sanctions simply overwhelms Saddam Hussein's abysmal human rights record. Amnesty International estimates that Hussein's regime killed 130,000 people between 1979 and 1989. In eight years, the sanctions have killed more than 10 times that number.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, in a letter to Sir John Weston at the Permanent Mission of UK to the UN calls the sanctions "a violation of the Genocide Convention." He goes on to say "the notion that Iraq is a threat to the region is a false fantasy created by the U.S. to justify its vast military presence in the region, to dominate the oil resources and to contain Islam."

Others, such as Halliday, have pointed out that the sanctions vio-

late the Geneva Convention — which prohibits the starvation of civilians as a means of warfare — as well as the Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

And what of Washington's duplicity? "Israel occupies territory illegally for thirty years, it violates the Geneva conventions at will, conducts invasions, terrorist attacks and assassinations against Arabs, and still, the US vetoes every sanction against it in the UN. Syria, Sudan, Libya, Iraq are classified as "rogue" states. Sanctions against them are far harsher than against any other countries in the history of US foreign policy. And still the US expects that its own foreign policy agenda ought to prevail," wrote Columbia University professor Edward Said, in Al-Hayat newspaper in London.

And, speaking of the weapons of mass destruction that Washington claims ad nauseum to be so concerned about, last November the UN General Assembly passed a resolution, 134 - 2, asking Israel "not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons," and to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). The two countries voting against the resolution were Israel and the United States.

And UNSCOM chief Richard Butler has admitted that UN inspectors had shared intelligence information with the United States and Israel.

But Washington's hypocrisy, of course, neither begins nor ends with Israel. The United States is the only country to have ever dropped a nuclear bomb on human beings, a country that is the world's largest stockpiler of weapons of mass destruction, and one that has over the last 50 years installed and supported some of the most murderous dictators the world has seen. To hear officials of this country speak self-righteously of the need to eliminate Iraqi weapons and Iraqi violations of international law should turn anyone's stomach.

But a populace starved of the most basic education guarantees settled stomachs in the United States even as Washington's policy ensures that, a world away, little food makes its way into the hungry mouths of brown children who will join the dead before they have had a chance to live.

## M a k e a n I M P A C T

Iraq Action Coalition  
<http://leb.net/IAC/>

Iraq sanctions - the silent weapon  
<http://www.iacenter.org/iraq.htm>

Committee Against US Intervention  
<http://www.antiwar.com/iraq/iraq.html>

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**Q:** "This may not be an actual AIDS question but I really need to know. I recently have been diagnosed with two sexually transmitted diseases, and when I was in the clinic I was told that by just getting VD I was at more risk of getting AIDS. I sort of blew it off when I was there but I was wondering if that is true or were they just trying to scare me. If it's true, what should I do now? Please answer my question."

17 year old in trouble  
in Jacksonville

By  
**Jeffrey-John  
Nunziata**

**A:** The people you spoke with in the clinic were right. Individuals who become infected with a sexually transmitted disease (STD) are at increased risk for HIV infection. You see, when you get infected with any STD there is the possibility that more than one infection can be transferred at any given time, like in your case, you were diagnosed with two infections. Since HIV can be transferred through blood and through sex, there is the possibility that HIV could have been transferred as well as the two STDs. Since most people do not show any signs or symptoms of HIV for about 10 years, you won't know you have it unless you

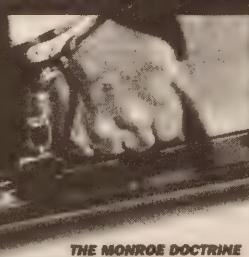
get tested for it. Go back to the clinic and get tested for HIV, that's the only way to be sure. Also, make sure you do not have unprotected sex with your partner until they get treated as well. You could get re-infected with those diseases all over again. You are not immune.

**If you want to mail letters to an address....**

**Jeffrey-John Nunziata**  
Florida Department of Health  
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By Chip McConnell

458 AD - Socrates, when asked to explain what philosophy and religion have in common, replies, "Philosophy is the top on a cereal box. Religion is a shaggy dog."

1215 AD - King John of England assures the right to trial by jury with the signing of the Magna Carta. He is praised by his forward thinking and says, "The virtues and impact of this document will live far beyond us, for all we are is dust in the wind."

1732 AD - Benjamin Franklin publishes Poor Richard's Almanac. When asked what information it will contain, Franklin says, "It's sort of about me. It's the dirty story of a dirty man and his clinging wife doesn't understand."

1926 AD - Goddard develops a working rocket engine. When asked what he envisioned by his invention, he answers, "I see use of my rocket in transportation, perhaps air travel. However, I like it here in America and I wouldn't want that big 'ol jet airliner to take me too far away because it's here I'm bound to stay."

1982 AD - Dr. Robert Jarvick develops the first permanent artificial heart that will be used in December on dentist Dr. Barney Clark. When asked to show this marvel of technology, Dr. Jarvick is dismayed to learn that the Jarvick 7 was not shipped from his last lecture. "I'm sorry," Dr. Jarvick apologizes. "But it appears I left my heart in San Francisco."

Two Years Ago - An Air Force captain is shot down over the Iranian desert Dash-E-Lut and evades capture for six days before his rescue by American forces. When asked how he survived his ordeal, he replied, "I used the survival skills taught to me by the Air Force. I had to eat bugs and suck the moisture from plants." Suffering mostly from exhaustion and exposure, he rambled, "I've been through the desert on a horse with no name. It felt good to get out of the rain. In the desert, you can't remember your name for there ain't no one for to give you no pain."

Today in History is brought to you by Jimi Hendrix brand Self Igniting Electric Guitars. Stop, drop and Rock and Roll!

# Can't Find a Bitter Man

by Rick Buss • art by Eachean Edmundson

"Is that meaning me? Chicken?!"

Jimmy, Rebel Without A Cause

Hypocrisy does not usually lend itself to accurate reporting, but in my case, I'm an American, and I'm telling you this for you own good.

Now, my contradictory nature has not made me a bitter man, but my observations are sometimes mistaken for judgements, and this can prove quite caustic when it comes to seeing things as they are.

My observation of the day rests upon the supposed "men" who sport the "Fear This" bumper sticker on their cars. Gimmee a fucking break! Fear what, punk? Your two-inch penis?

Actually, it's a reminder to his poor, entrenched girlfriend of his feelings when she speaks of dumping him because he's an asshole.

"No, they get along fine - they never fight."

These are the guys I'd like to see roll their cars about ten times before they end up in a ditch filled with muddy water - upside down. We'll see who's screaming like a frightened child then.

Fear this, hah! These cats don't have a clue about fear. Give 'em a couple of band-aids and send 'em to Kosovo for a month to work with NATO minesweepers sniffing out "bouncing Betties", shrapnel mines that work on the groin more than the legs; or carve the happy slogan, "I Hate Niggers" in their foreheads and lock 'em in a holding cell with street-mauler turned peace activist "Iron" Mike Tyson, and hesitant, introspective film director Spike Lee.

Fear this, huh? Fuck you, punk! I fear your Momma's teeth! These are the same guys who ride around town with their fingers on their chins, like they're in a thoughtful mood. Hey asshole, you look just like ten other status-addicted dumbshits with sissyboy haircuts I saw crawling out of the ditch back down the road.

What're you thinkin' about, pal? America's foreign policy? Insider trading? Your dick? What you're gonna do with it next time you're alone? Go on, suck your finger, punk. Suck it like you know you want to. It's creepin' up to your tongue but you won't do it. Know why? You're afraid, that's why. Now, forget your lack of proper fathering and get that finger away from your mouth and get a cigarette for your oral fixation, like the rest of us. It's not my fault you never got a shot at your mother's nips, and I shouldn't have to compensate you with my submission.

Wake up, Kid, you're not Bob Marley on the cover of *Legend* or John Coltrane on his *Blue Train* album; what you are is a pseudo-intellectual, syndicated, gangsta' caricature, an exaggerated illusion of subtle power, a cartoon - a true American. Yeah, you're thinkin' alright - thinkin' 'bout how you're gonna pay for that bank-owned, dropped-down car that Mommy cosigned for, and still be able to afford milk and cookies for dinner on that Krystal's salary.

Hey buddy, what do you do when you see someone else with the same "Fear This" sticker? They both sit there at red lights and contemplate each other with their hands on their chins, waiting for

the light to turn green so they can race and declare a winner.

They would be hypocrites to not fear any other chump bearing the same breast-beating slogan, if they expected any respect for their own demand - but that's the nature of the beast.

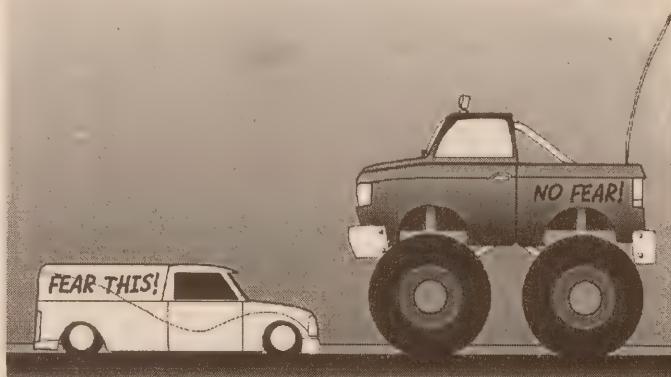
It's all just a bunch of thinly veiled, unoriginal, macho bullshit. Follow the leader into intimidation; only they all think they're the leader, so they end up like dogs chasing their own tails, only following themselves.

Give us a break, fellas. Isn't there enough fear and force and needless suffering in today's world without your selfish need to anonymously dominate anyone who happens to read your bullshit motto, one you didn't even write?

For these guys I prescribe leasing the biggest SUV they can find and seeing a doctor for a Viagra prescription. These two approaches, more sophisticated, as well as economically beneficial to the automobile and pharmaceutical industries, are widely accepted as treatments for feelings of sexual inadequacy.

Rather than intimidating the general public by pasting a two-word, preschooler's scribbling to your vehicle, you can then join the rest of the muscle and domination worshippers who agree that largeness does matter. While you're at it, find a state university alumni plate and maybe a cell phone. Just an antenna will suffice - remember, we're dealing with sublime appearances here, and if you can promote the illusion of being important and having a big dick, most likely, you will be credited with everything you have coming to you, no pun intended. That is, until you open your mouth to attempt communication, or a truly big fish opens his mouth to swallow your small, weak ass up.

You want to be feared? Without being bitter, here is what I recommend: Head into the darkness about five blocks south of Comiskey Park after a White Sox game, around 11:30 at night, in the middle of a heat wave, to the corner of...no, wait - since you're in Chicago, check out Cabrini Green, the city's most notorious political euphemism for housing "project", where the annual homicide rate in a small group of high-rise buildings exceeds that of most American towns. Fear lives here, and when you arrive, immediately



find the biggest, meanest looking, wave cap sportin' motherfucker you can find, break his stride as he's walking past with his lady in one hand and his bottle of MD 20/20 in the other, and ask him for directions to the Masonic Temple. When he pulls out his snub-nose, grab your dick, flip him off, flash a fake cop's badge, and yell "Fear this, you pussy-ass toilet bowl licker!" right in his face. When he seems momentarily flustered and speechless, rap him with an open hand slap on the side of his extra-strength Buffrin head, if you can reach it, and throw in "That's for your cigarette stealin' ho', Dick Nose!" Be prepared, the concept of fear may reveal itself to you suddenly, in many complex and abstract forms. Soon though, you will have a better understanding of the world around you, as well as a more complete feeling for the origins of fear and bitterness. If you can, take notes.

Aw, hell, I give 'em all a big thumbs up. To each his own, I guess, and if it makes a poorly endowed man feel comfortable to advertise himself as some low level, personal intimidator, that's fine with me. If he weren't an ignorant bottom feeder he'd have the financial and political clout to make people fear him, with military action or an election. Consequently, as a sort of personal consolation for his sexual deficiency, he posts a miniature billboard on his Big Wheel that says "Boo!" Whatever, dude.

Quite certainly, there's no bitterness involved in the need to bully and instill fear in others. He must be on top of the world to want to share these kind, sentimental words with us on a daily basis. I'm

sure he's content living life as the psychological bastard of a desensitized society, who's forgotten how to cry, never hit a woman he didn't like, and who doles out fear cheaper than crack-rock to any attitude dealin', horn lockin', testosterone junkie who challenges him in these wasted streets.

I'm not afraid of you or your purchased slogan - you both give me quite a deal. Fear is free, chump, and why should I pay a dead man like Jesus for my fear when some bitter punk like you can give it to me gratis, live and in person.

Economically speaking, your bitterness has its costs, as a product of fear, and products, like punks, need images and slogans to boost lagging sales and turn a profit. That's why the cost of your bitterness is so great - the demand for fear is at an all time high, and as an American I'm here to collect your overdue payment.

On second thought, this might be a bargain, a steal in fact - let's water and nurture these narcissistic cads who promote fear, these immature bleaters of hatred, and use them for the purposeful, angry young men they have made themselves out to be. Then send 'em off to war where they belong, whether it's a justified fight or not, and keep our sons home to breed lines of beautiful, educated daughters to screw.

Like I was saying, I think I know a good deal when I see it. I mean, why should we buy into the cow of bitterness when the fear of milk is free? We're Americans, god-dammit all to hell, the small-dicked product of two-hundred years of rebellious, land grabbin',

(FEAR, continued on page 44)

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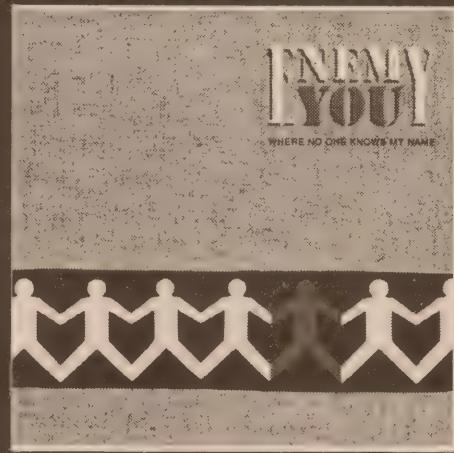
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# Protecting our space

(SPACE, continued from page 15)

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(Bruce Gagnon is the Secretary/Treasurer for Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space. For more information, visit their website: <http://www.globenet.free-online.co.uk/>)

## More from Your World

(WORLD, continued from page 11)

every day? How about the four people that died on I-75 over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday? Why not shut down the interstates while we're at it? Common sense, Mr. Shipley, says people need to heed the warnings of message boards, flashing signs and the posted speed limits on the damned roadways. The bottom line is that the Celebration road in question meets or exceeds all of the county and state-set standards. There is no place or no one to put the blame on. It helps but when it's not there you can't create it.

Until next time, this is the end of Your World.

## Our ending world

(THE END, continued from page 8)

Unfortunately, many of us are turning to equally dysfunctional belief systems for relief—Satanism, Wicca, Prozac. That's a little like turning over a dollar bill and hoping there's a 10-spot on the back. It would be better, instead, to assimilate the useful things we've gained from religion, then move forward, much as a child assimilates his parents' teachings, then moves toward adulthood.

I relaxed and decided that the world will probably not end in a few months, after all. However, I'm still writing the play about it. Just because I don't think it will happen doesn't mean there's not a lot of comic potential in it.

I have a prediction of my own, however: in the coming months, every time it rains very hard, some jerk on television will try to make the case that it's a sign of the coming destruction of the world. Like most everything on commercial television, it's bullshit, but it sells.

We don't want God to destroy us, anyway. We're quite capable of destroying ourselves. One can only hope that we have what it takes to save ourselves, too.

# Rethinking Christianity

(RELIGION, continued from page 13)

insist on biblical literalism thus become unwitting accomplices in bringing about the death of the Christianity they so deeply love.

Spong is not a publicity whore or saber-rattler, demanding attention and swift destruction of his opponents. He is a peaceful, passionate observer, uncovering the truly objectionable passages of the Bible, and attempting to promote the idea that God is perhaps far more subtle and non-denominational than first-century minds could fathom in their time of pre-scientific magic. God isn't a supreme commander who needs to be satiated and worshipped lest he cast someone into the lake of fire. Perhaps He isn't a He at all, but was labeled "He" by the patriarchal filters of the minds of the prophets.

I've always said that I won't worship any God under duress, and Spong appears to be on the same level. His vision of Christianity doesn't dole out punishments and rewards a la Santa Claus. It's fuzzy thinking to believe that God is keeping a list of wrongdoings and golden accomplishments for every human being which He will one day use for or against us in the big court case in the sky.

Spong has been a strong proponent of ordaining women and homosexuals as priests, and has included them in the full life of his church, excluding no one.

If there were ever a strong enough movement like this in the Christian church which could abandon fear, which could build a foundation on intellectual progression instead of blind faith, and could embrace true love and light for all people, perhaps I would elect to give it a try. Because as it stands, it isn't the notions of divine love that bug me about religion. It's the two-thousand-year-old residual hate, the rhetoric, the absolute right and wrong, the explaining away of every scientific discovery as God "testing our faith."

I encourage any curious souls who are struggling with religion to dive into these books: *Why Christianity Must Change or Die* and *Rescuing...*, for they are truly necessary works in our time if Christianity is ever to be saved from itself.

Until then, try not to slaughter any entire races of people, m'kay?

## Bumper sticker fear

(FEAR, continued from page 43)

big stick carryin', tall walkin', fear instillin' punks, who, in the reality of history and fates of similar societies long gone, now have only the inadequacies of ourselves to fear.

So get busy, friends and neighbors. Intimidate anyone you can, find their weakness, friend or foe, family or stranger, as long as they're an American, and let's hasten this inevitable decline that befits a gluttonous society that has too much wine in the cellar and too many skeletons in its closet. Like my lecherous, embezzling, closing manager at Shoney's used to say after a hectic Friday night slingin' hash, "it's all over but the cryin." Selah.

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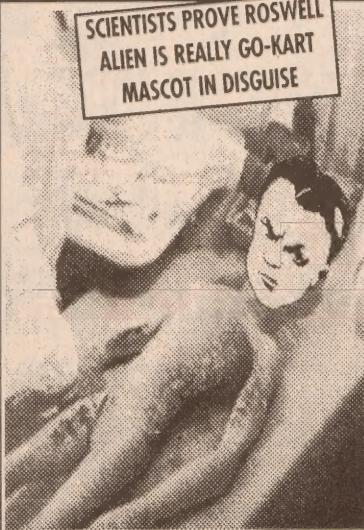
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issue #21

**Issue #21, June/July '99, Cover Story: Imprisoning the Mind - Art Censorship in America -- Also: Facing 30, Death with Dignity or a .22, A Patriotic Left**

**Issue #20, Apr/May '99, Cover Story: The Chaining of America -- Also: The Death Penalty: Reassessing the Punishment, School of the Americas: Training Foreign Killers**

**Issue #19, Feb/Mar '99, Cover Story: Population Control: How Many Are Too Many? -- Also: Imprisoning the Masses: Dark Side of a Prison State, Human Rights Issues**

**Issue #18, Dec/Jan '98-99, Cover Story: Interview with Michael Moore plus, Are Women Just a Bunch of Boobs -- Also: An Inside Look at the Homeless Problem**

**Issue #17, Oct/Nov '98, Cover Story: Battle For Governor of Florida -- Also: Sexual Politics in the Workplace, Money Determines our Society**

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*Population Control:  
How Many Are Too Many?*



Inside:  
Imprisoning the Masses  
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**Issue #9, Jun/Jul '97, Cover Story: The Assault on Public Education -- Also: Interview with a white supremacist, More from Mumia Abu-Jamal**

**Issue #8, Apr/May '97, Cover Story: Commentaries by Mumia Abu-Jamal -- Also: New Urbanism, Racism Today, The Real American-The Real Radical**

**Issue #7, Feb/Mar '97, Cover Story: American Religion on the Cross -- Also: Failed War on Drugs, Physician Assisted Suicide, Can Nutmeg Get You High?**

**Issue #6, Dec/Jan '96-97, Cover Story: Confronting the "Drug Problem" -- Also: Gay Marriage Rights, Net Censorship, The Idiot Clause, Ad Trickery**

**Issue #5, Oct/Nov '96, Cover Story: Election '96 Special -- Also: Corporate Terrorists, Chiapas Mexico Injustice, Film is About Soul**

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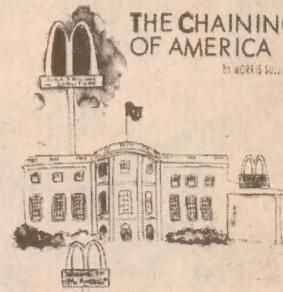
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issue #20

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Meeting Society's Expectations Through Mutilation**

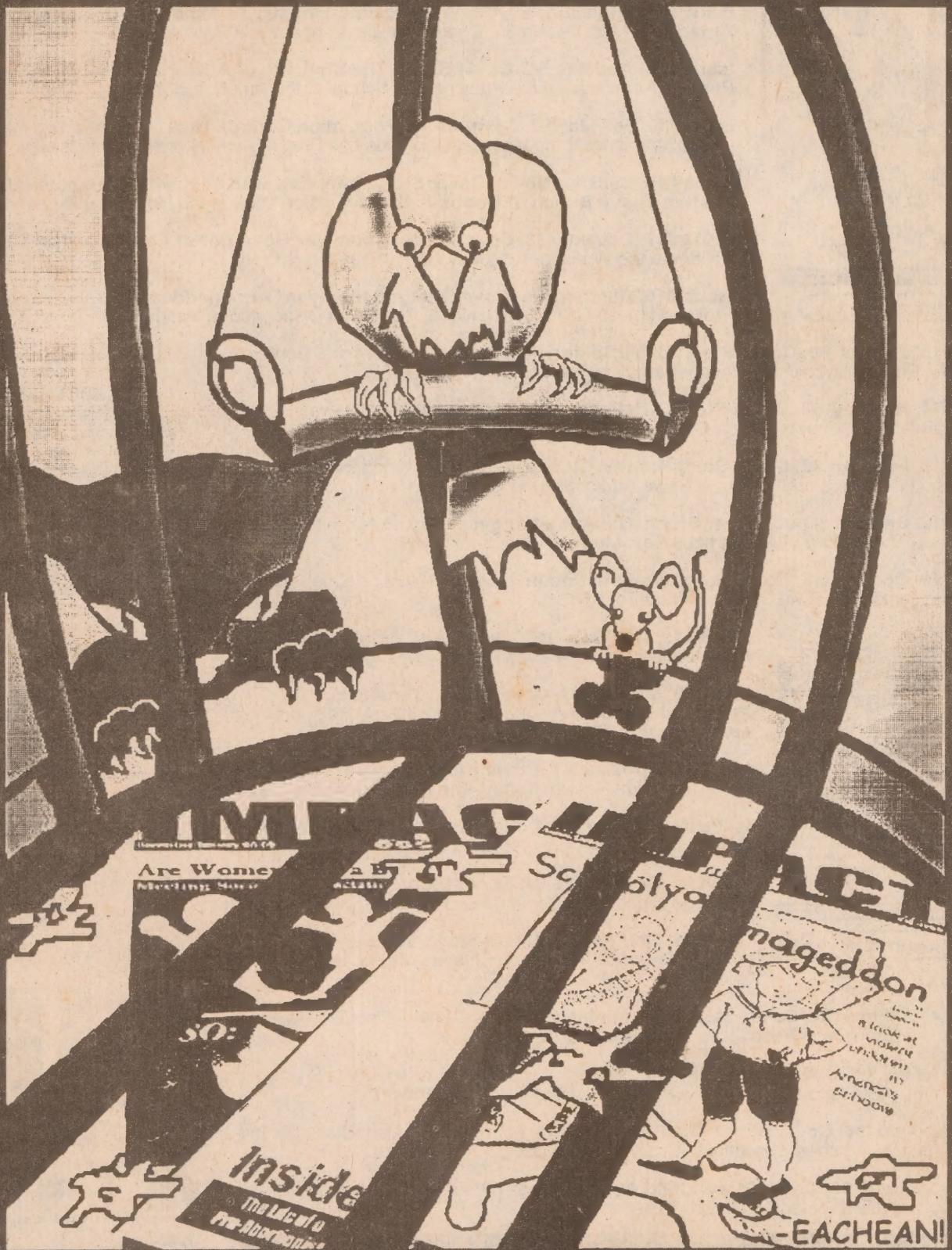


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